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The Italians transformed jeans into an icon of chic. One of the creators in Italy is GAS, and now they've come to China.



北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY



Behind the scenes with West Side's Tony and Maria.

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Barefoot walking removes the barrier between us and nature.

(Page 20)



Max Zago brings Italian design values to Chinese sports shoes.

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TCM heals Beslan terror victims

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More than 8,000 residents were evacuated after a chemical store explosion and fire Wednesday night in Dongpu, near Guangzhou in Guangdong Province.

CFP Photo

Top rocker charged with arson

By Han Manman

Top Chinese rocker Dou Wei has been charged with arson after allegedly attacking a newspaper office and torching a car.

Staff at *The Beijing News* claim the rock star burst into their office on Wednesday afternoon, assaulted staff, broke windows and smashed a computer and TV before being dragged away by friends.

"Without any warning, Dou suddenly threw mineral water in the face of one of our senior staff. He then smashed the office window, computer and TV. To show respect to Dou, we con-

tacted his friends instead of calling the police. Two of his friends came to the office and persuaded him to leave," says the newspaper.

But the rocker, who was said to be furious about an 'inaccurate' report about him that also divulged details of his private life, returned two hours later and poured flammable liquid over a car belonging to a member of the paper's staff, and subsequently set it alight.

Staff at the paper called the police and Dou was arrested after apparently admitting to setting the car on fire.

To our readers

Dear readers,

You may be surprised by the more compact format of today's paper; beginning today, your *Beijing Today* has been repackaged into an exciting new 32-page tabloid newspaper.

Yesterday (May 11) was the 5th anniversary of *Beijing Today*. We would like to thank all our readers for the support you have given us consistently over the past half-decade.

We are always seeking to improve your reading experience and the service we provide. The new-look *Beijing Today* brings you your news in a much easier format, and we have

also taken the opportunity to revamp our content to provide you with an even more interesting and informative read.

Beijing Today will continue to bring you the latest and most important news and introduce you to fascinating aspects of Chinese culture, and now we will also be giving more space to what's going on in the local ex-pat community.

We hope you enjoy your new *Beijing Today*. If you have any suggestions or comments about our newspaper, please feel free to email them to us at: bjtoday@ynet.com.

Hoax child kidnappings

By Jiang Xubo

Police are warning parents to be on their guard after a spate of hoax child kidnappings in the capital.

Men with south Chinese accents have been calling mums and dads in Beijing claiming to have kidnapped their children and demanding huge ransoms of up to 100,000 yuan (around \$12,500).

The callers use information they have about the child's school, year and class to try and convince parents that they snatched the kids as they studied.

Fortunately no one has yet been duped by the scam but police fear it may only be a matter

of time.

"If you get a call, keep calm and write down in detail what the purported kidnappers say," said a police spokesman. "When they hang up, telephone the police straight away."

Police say there is a common theme that links many of the hoaxers - their telephone numbers start with the codes 00195 or 00019, indicating that the suspects may be dialing from abroad.

The possibility that they also call using domestic IP distant telephone cards has not been ruled out.

Police are warning students not to talk with strangers about their families.

Qualifications for Olympic volunteers

By Tom Mackenzie

Olympic volunteers could be rewarded with internationally recognized qualifications if a plan by British and Chinese education chiefs gets the green light.

Beijing and London will be the hosts of the next two Olympic games, in 2008 and 2012 respectively. Officials from both countries are already looking at ways to recruit the armies of volunteers needed to help stage the event.

Bill Rammell, the UK's newly appointed minister for higher education, said awarding volun-

teers with a qualification could be the key. "There will be a huge demand for volunteers in Beijing and London when the Olympics come to our respective countries," he said. "There will be a need for literally tens of thousands of volunteers in both cities. We are looking to see whether we can put together a qualification for these volunteers that can be internationally recognized."

Officials from both China and Britain will get together to work up that proposal in the coming months.

End of line for Beijing South station



The Beijing South Railway Station

By Lucky Zhang

Beijing South Railway Station, built in 1897, closed this Wednesday. All the trains that normally depart from the station will now leave from Beijing railway station, Beijing West railway station, Beijing North railway station or Fengtai railway station. Next year, the construction of a brand new south railway station will be completed.

The old south railway station

Photo by Brook Wang

was located at Yongdingmen in Xuanwu District. It was built to be used for at most 10 years, but remained in constant use until this year.

The new south railway station will be just 500 meters from the site of the former one, and will be a similar size to Beijing West. Passengers will be able to transfer between trains, the subway, buses and taxis at the new station.



Yu Zhenhuan and his lawyer in court

Photo by Dragon Wang

'World's hairiest man' sues over pictures

By Jiang Xubo

A Chinese man named 'World's hairiest person' by the Guinness Book of Records is suing a company for putting his pictures on their website.

Yu Zhenhuan, who was born with a rare genetic disease that means he has thick black hair covering 96 per cent of his body, including his face, went to court this week accusing event organizers, China-Carnival, of violating his 'portrait rights' by publishing pictures of him without his permission.

The 28-year-old musician, known as 'Hairy-boy' in China, is demanding that the company stop using his portraits. He also wants an official apology from the company and compensation of 200,000 yuan (US \$ 25,000).

"I agreed for these photos to be taken but I didn't authorize you to publish them on your website for promotion," Yu said in court.

China Carnival claims that they took the pictures with Yu's agreement and had used them without damaging his reputation. They have also denied causing Yu any 'mental suffering'.

The company has removed the pictures that were taken in its amusement park last August, from its website. But they have threatened to republish them if they win the case.

The company's website published a dozen other pictures of celebrities' visits to their visits amusement park and claim to have received no other complaints.

The case continues.

A Beijing toy story

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Beijing's tradition of hand-made toys, which has faded away over the years, is seeing a revival in an exhibition of Shengtangxuan's Toys currently on view at the Wangfujing Paleolithic Museum.

Children and also many adult visitors were delighted by the colorful and interesting items on show. The exhibition includes about 500 toys popular in the period from the early 1900s to the founding of People's Republic of China in 1949. Many of the toys depict characters in Beijing folklore, such as a series of the God of Rabbits, which was said to cure people from the plague. Vis-

iting parents found the exhibition reminded them of their own childhood, stories of which they excitedly shared with their children.

Tang Qiliang, the maker of the toys on display, is the fourth generation of a Manchu toy-making family. He makes toys of wood, paper, clay and cloth and has sold his work at temple fairs in old Beijing. Tang has become a local celebrity, known as Toy Tang, or Flannel Tang, because of his trademark flannel toys.

The flannel toys Tang made often reflect everyday life in old Beijing. He makes trade caravans with their camels, rich women sitting in rickshaws, acrobats and

animal characters that bring good fortune.

"Children today seldom play in courtyards or on door steps in the back lanes. Computer games and television have taken the place of hand-made toys, which often take more effort and time to make. However, it is important to let the children know the value of these toys, and the stories behind them. The toys are not only handicrafts, but also works of art, history and the memories of a generation", said Tang Yujie, Qiliang's granddaughter.

The Shengtangxuan Toys Exhibition runs from April 20 to July 19 at the Wangfujing Paleolithic Museum, W1 P3 Oriental Plaza, Wangfujing Street.

New insect market opens in Shilihe

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Beijing's insect fans these days head for a new gathering place at the Huasheng Tianqiao open market for flowers, birds, fish and insects. The old market in Panjiayuan has been torn down, replaced by the new site at Huasheng which opened its doors for the first time during the May holiday. Huasheng is in Shilihe in Southeast Beijing.

The New Huasheng market has Qing style buildings similar to those of the old Panjiayuan site: shops built of blue bricks, painted temples and pavilions, and colorful paintings about how Beijingers in Qing Dynasty appreciated birds and enjoyed fighting insects. Goldfish, seasonal flowers, insects, birds and antique business are selling as well as ever.

Though the new market is actually just one junc-

tion away from the old, many old customers are confused by the complicated route. The market arranges a shuttle bus between the old location and the new market that runs every five minutes.

To keep an insect as a pet is now fashionable among young white-collar workers. As summer is coming, the price of insects is dropping, attracting more customers. It is always a pleasure to get together with friends in a teahouse, and compare the little insects in pots. Keeping crickets has a history of nearly one thousand years in China, stretching back to the Song Dynasty. There are over 40 popular types in the market today. It seems that the most fashionable urbanites are interested in ancient ways of entertainment. "The older, the cooler", said Richard Yao, who works at an IT company.



Photos provided by CCRP

Lost antiques retrieved from Japan

By Qiu Jiaoning

More than 20 Chinese antiques thought lost have been retrieved from Japan by a group of Chinese antiques experts and collectors, an official from China's Lost Cultural Relics Recovery Program (CCRRP) said.

Niu Xianfeng, director of the Publicity Department of CCRP, said that most of these antiques were found in folk curio markets in Osaka and Kyoto and bought by Chinese private collectors.

Chen Meng, a collector from Beijing, bought a bronze con-

tainer with three hollow legs, dating from late Shang Dynasty to early Zhou Dynasty. Experts said that bronzeware during the Shang and Zhou Dynasties have irreplaceable and significant artistic and historical value.

In addition, the group attended the famous All-Japan Old Folk Utensil and Antique Fair, where they found some 10 percent of the items were Chinese antiques. Reclaiming these cultural relics was difficult, however, because of historic problems. Retrieving China's lost antiques

from private enterprises or collectors is more effective, according to Niu.

"This summer, CCRP plans to organize Chinese antiques experts and collectors to investigate and retrieve lost treasures now in northern Europe," said Niu.

The CCRP, founded in 2002, is the country's first non-governmental organization to retrieve Chinese relics lost overseas. CCRP has retrieved more than 20 artifacts since it began its Guobao Project in 2003 for this end.



Playing cards to help find missing children



Photo by Shen Hao

By Han Manman

To help locate missing children in China, at least 10,000 packs of playing cards featuring pictures of missing children are being prepared to be sent to police stations, civil administrations, and members of the public.

Shen Hao has been walking around 10 cities since March 20, and has already collected information on 30 missing children from more than 20 families. When he collects information on 52 missing children he will create China's first missing children deck of cards.

Shen's idea is based on the deck of cards used by the American army to identify members of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. "This method will attract people's attention and help us get information on the missing children," said Chen.

Shen established a missing persons website and a network of volunteers dedicated to finding missing people. The site has received more visitors than other similar non-profit websites in China. Since the site opened in 2001, 5,000 families have registered information about their missing persons on this website.

Each card will feature a picture of the missing child, their basic information and Shen's contact number. Shen said he plans to distribute 10,000 packs by June for free. He will focus in provinces with the highest rate of missing children like Fujian, Guangdong, Henan and Hebei. "Even if only 10,000 people see these cards the chances of finding the missing children will increase."

However, not many families believe he is doing this out of the goodness of his heart, and he has met with a lot of suspicion. "Some of them thought I just want to make money," said Shen. He said he charges 600 yuan for each child, or a total of 30,000 yuan for 52.

However, he said it would cost 20,000 yuan to make the 10,000 decks, not including transportation and other costs. "I will not make any profit and I will even lose money if it is closely calculated."

Big man has slim hopes for the future

By Annie Wei

Liang Yong, a 26-year-old from Dazu County, Chongqing city, is known as the fattest man in China. Liang is back in the public eye after recent photos and tales of his current life were published in the media.

Liang Yong has always weighed more than people of his age. At his heaviest, 220 kilograms, he was once rated as one of the fattest men in Asia.

Liang tried to lose weight. But his current business, running the Pangzi ('fatty') teahouse and a clothes shop hardly makes ends meet.

As a minor local celebrity, Liang was hired by Chongqing Wildlife Animal World to play an African sheik during the May holiday. The pay was 500 yuan per day, which was important to Liang and his family.

Local media took an interest in Liang's story. However, Chengdu TV station claimed that Liang charged them money to be interviewed. But Liang's family has denied that.

At Liang's Pangzi Teahouse, each bowl of tea costs only 0.5 yuan but there are not too many customers.

Liang's mother, who refused to give her name, said on the phone that the teahouse made more than 1,000 yuan profit each year.

Liang's mother said Liang wanted to lose weight and that the family were still looking for a reliable hospital specializing in weight loss.

"I hope to lose weight and get a new job," Liang said, "According to my current situation, I cannot pay money to lose weight."

Liang admitted that business at his teahouse was not good, and said he had opened another small clothes shop. Liang worries that his parents are aging and his own son is growing up; if he keeps gaining more weight, he might die and leave the family without anyone to support them.

Liang at his teahouse CFP Photo



Brief News

China becomes member of Human Rights Council

China, a member of the UN's Security Council, has made the list of the 47 members of UN's newly established Human Rights Council.

Three Gorges near completion

The giant dam of the Three Gorges hydropower project on the Yangtze River is expected to be ready on May 20.

20,500 arrested for pyramid selling

Police have arrested 20,500 people involved in over 2,800 cases of illegal pyramid selling in the last five years.

On-line gamblers detained

The police have cracked down on more than 350 on-line gambling cases and detained over 700 suspects so far this year, according to the Ministry of Public Security.

Bird flu outbreak confirmed

The number of dead wild birds from bird flu in a remote area of Qinghai Province reached 123 by Thursday, northwest China, according to the Ministry of Agriculture.

(By Jiang Xubo)

Movie crew criticized for destroying nature

By Lucky Zhang

The production crew working on the film 'The Promise', which was in theaters at the end of last year, destroyed natural scenery and plant life at Bigu Celestial Pond in Shangrila in Yunnan Province. Qiu Baoxing, vice minister of Ministry of Construction, speaking at a seminar in Hangzhou, criticized the film crew's actions.

Bigu Celestial Pond is located on a 4,000 meter-high mountain. The pond is clear, and is home to rare varieties of azalea, dense virgin forest and unspoiled grassland.

"However, when the production of the movie finished and the crew left, the scenic spot was seriously damaged," said Qiu Baoxing.

"Rubbish like plastic lunch boxes, alcohol bottles, plastic bags, and rain coats were everywhere. Hundreds of wooden stakes were punched into the pond. A track of azalea was razed. The pond was divided into two parts by a tattered wooden bridge."

Qiu Baoxing also criticized excessive human impact and urbanization on some of China's scenic spots, with illegal house building, damage to natural heritage and the problem of the destruction of the aquatic environment.

'The Promise' was directed by Chen Kaige, and cost 340 million yuan to make. It was shot in several locations, including Yunnan, Inner Mongolia and Zhejiang.

Outlook will focus on the news behind the news. We invite reporters to share background information and experiences with us, providing greater depth and different angles on the stories they write.

Beijing, May 8 (PTI) - China's family planning policy has helped in preventing 400 million births up to the end of 2005, according to a senior official at the National Population and Family Planning Commission.

In an interview with Qiushi magazine, Zhang Weiqing, the minister in charge of the commission, said that intense efforts over the past three decades had helped China curb its high population growth and record a low birth rate.

He said the country had succeeded in reducing 300 million

China prevents 400 million births

births by 1998 and 400 million births by 2005.

Government statistics show that a Chinese couple have on average 1.8 children. The number was as high as 6 in the early 1970s when the family planning policy was first introduced.

The 400 million births, if not prevented, would have postponed China's drive to build a well-off society, said Zhang.

He added that this achievement should be recognized, as many developed countries spent over a century before achieving low birth rates.



Interview with the reporter:
Q: Why did you want to write this report?

A: Because India and China share the same worries about our huge populations. China's success has value for India, and vice versa.

Q: Do you have a similar family planning policy in India?

A: No. But our government encourages people to have at most two children.

Q: What is the real picture of the birthrate in India?

A: In the urban cities, young couples generally have two children. In the countryside, they usually have three to four.

Q: Don't you worry that someday in the near future, the population in India will boom?

A: Hahaha...Generally speaking, our birth control efforts have been a failure.

Q: Back to China, people can now apply for a second child in certain circumstances. What do you think of that?

A: I appreciate the policy adjustment, or loosening. It is becoming more reasonable. It [to have two babies] is good for the kids growing up, and good for the couples when they get old.

— Anil K. Joseph, PTI, Beijing

Shortage of workers plagues nuclear sector

BEIJING, May 8 (UPI) - China's plans to develop its nuclear power industry face a major hurdle: a shortage of personnel.

"The current number of staff is far below the demand," said Kang Rixin, general manager of China National Nuclear Corporation, as quoted by Xinhua on Sunday.

Asia's second-largest economy needs energy to feed its rapidly growing markets. Beijing is seeking to diversify its sources of energy. It plans to expand installed nuclear power generating capacity to 40m kw by 2020, up from 8.7m kw.

This is expected to meet part of the energy demand and ease environmental pollution from coal-fired power plants.

Kang urged colleges and universities to attach more importance to training nuclear technicians, noting only some 100,000 people were in the industry.

Interview with the reporter:

Q: As China is facing such a shortage of personnel in the nuclear industry, do you think that the US and China should cooperate in this field?

A: Of course. It brings benefits to both sides.

Q: But Washington is worrying about China's rise and the challenges.

A: Yes. There are still some people having those worries in Washington. The US government is still holding export controls on so-called "sensitive" technologies and products to China.

Q: Washington is still holding controls of high-tech exports to China.

A: Yes. It's unfortunate. But, we should be optimistic as the

two countries are finding more convergence for cooperation.

Q: Can you further explain that 'convergence'?

A: They are opening dialogues in more and more sectors, including the nuclear sector.

More American companies are keen to enter the nuclear power industry in China, which has such huge potential. For instance, Westinghouse has signed a number of contracts with its Chinese partners for future cooperation.

Q: What about the prospects?

A: I have been living in China since 1988 and working for UPI since 2002. From my observation, it's a process of time. The US government will loosen those controls, though step by step.

— Edward Lanfranco, UPI Beijing

Government hampers US competitiveness, China surges: IMD ranking

Geneva, May 10 (AFP) - The competitiveness of the US economy, still the highest in the world, is being undermined by the US government, allowing more efficient and smaller Asian and Nordic economies to catch up, a leading ranking of the most competitive nations showed.

The IMD report assesses economic performance, government and business efficiency, and infrastructure - including factors like education, technology, health and social services - to establish its annual ranking.

"A growing gap between governments and economic performance is always a bad omen for the future," said Stephane Garelli, editor of the IMD business school's 2006 World Competitiveness Yearbook.

China (19th) demonstrated its sharp economic growth by continuing its surge up the league table, leapfrogging 12 places since last year to reach the top 20.

Despite the criticism, the United States remained at the head of an unchanged top four, in front of Hong Kong, Singapore and Iceland.

"Hong Kong and Singapore are catching up because their governments are more in synchronisation with economic performance," Garelli said.

Garelli also underlined that the US debt was now largely financed by Asian central banks through their holding of US treasury bonds - mainly Japan, China, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong, as well as Russia.

China now owns 819 billion dollars of foreign currency reserves, just behind Japan.

"It is a quite remarkable fact that the largest communist nation in the world may soon become

the first creditor of the largest capitalist nation in the world," Garelli pointed out.

However, China is one of 29 economies in the survey of 61 nations or regions where government is rated as having negative impact on competitiveness.

The yearbook also highlighted problems with state efficiency in Argentina (55th), Brazil (52nd), Italy (56th), Mexico (53rd) and Venezuela (last) that were compounding often severe economic problems there.

China and India (up ten places to 29th) face the challenge of keeping pace with their booming economic growth by meeting the expectations of their huge populations, according to the yearbook.

"Failure to do so may create economic and social imbalances that could jeopardize what has been achieved so far. The lesson here: success has a price," Garelli said.

The top 20:

- 1: United States
- 2: Hong Kong
- 3: Singapore
- 4: Iceland
- 5: Denmark (up 2 places)
- 6: Australia (up 3)
- 7: Canada (up 2)
- 8: Switzerland
- 9: Luxembourg (up 1)
- 10: Finland (down 4)
- 11: Ireland (up 1)
- 12: Norway (up 3)
- 13: Austria (up 4)
- 14: Sweden
- 15: Netherlands (down 2)
- 16: Bavaria (up 2)
- 17: Japan (up 4)
- 18: Taiwan (down 7)
- 19: China (up 12)
- 20: Estonia (up 6)

Beijing bans cigarette sale at newsstands

Beijing, May 8 (Reuters) - Beijing municipal authorities showed the red light to cigarette selling at newsstands which are everywhere throughout the capital, to ensure safety and curb fire risk.

Jointly issued by the Beijing Municipal Administration of Production Safety and the Tobacco Monopoly Bureau, the regulations specify essential facilities for the outlets of companies engaged in tobacco retails.

The requirements have ruled out possibility for poorly-equipped houses such as newsstands to get license for tobacco retails due to their questionable safety conditions.

Instead of makeshift shan-

ties, all outlets shall be located in buildings with a fire resistance capability. The external wall shall be at least 25 centimeters thick, the authority requires.

"Each two tobacco stands shall be located at least 150 meters apart in bustling avenues," the regulations say.

The regulations also demanded at least two powder fire extinguishers in each outlet, and a GPS monitoring system in each vehicle for tobacco transportation.

Tobacco retails enterprises are obliged to provide training on safety production to its staff and equip them with necessities to ensure occupational safety, according to the regulations.

Beijing stores sell counterfeit alcohol

Beijing, May 8 (Reuters) - In a check this week, the Municipal Department of Industry and Commerce found that over half of the businesses that sell cigarettes and wine were actually selling counterfeit wines.

The department checked about 400 businesses including peddlers at shopping malls, supermarkets and restaurants before the holiday.

The authorities confiscated 3,937 bottles of unqualified alcohol that covered almost all the best-selling brands across China. The department has put these enterprises on probation, pending further penalties.

A representative from department suggests customers buy wines at big shopping malls and franchise supermarkets.

US says China not manipulating currency

Washington, May 11 (Reuters) - The US Treasury Department ruled that China was not a currency manipulator, angering lawmakers who say Beijing keeps its yuan undervalued at a cost to Americans in lost jobs and rising deficits.

"Given our strong disappointment and the importance of China to the world economy, the Treasury Department will closely monitor China's progress in implementing its economic rebalancing strategy...and continue actively and frankly to press China to quicken the pace of renminbi flexibility," the Treasury Department said in a semi-annual report on currency practices of key trading partners.

The reaction from Capitol Hill was hostile as lawmakers protested China floods US markets with cheaply priced goods.

The Treasury ruling was in its twice-a-year report to Congress on currency practices of trade partners.

It also declined in its report last November 28 to call China a manipulator and said it would keep pressuring China on flexibility.

Treasury said China did not meet 'technical requirements' set out in a 1988 law for being labeled a manipulator and cited a commitment to move to a flexible exchange rate given by Chinese President Hu Jintao during a US visit in April.

Citigroup scales back China bank bid plan

Shanghai, May 11 (Bloomberg) - Citigroup Inc. is poised to reorganize the shareholding structure of its \$3 billion group investment bid for China's Guangdong Development Bank and take a smaller individual stake as it yields to Beijing's restrictions, people familiar with the sale process said.

Citigroup wants to exceed with a 40 percent stake in Guang-

dong Development Bank and intends to lead a group of foreign and domestic investors to buy 85 percent of the Bank.

Guangdong provincial officials, acting on behalf of Guangdong Bank, have told Citigroup it should reorganize its investor structure to comply with existing restrictions.

A Citigroup spokesman in Hong Kong declined to comment.

Bank of China eyes Shanghai after HK IPO

Hong Kong, May 11 (Reuters) - Bank of China is planning a US\$9.8 billion Hong Kong initial public offering on June 1, and may soon thereafter list up to 20 billion yuan (US\$2.5 billion) in domestic A shares, according to a preliminary listing document seen by Reuters on Wednesday.

The bank's IPO in Hong Kong could be the largest ever by a Chinese company.

On its roadshow this week, 12 investors have purchased 22 percent of the bank's offerings, including China Life, Ping'an Insurance,

Mitsubishi-Tokyo-UFJ, East Asia Bank, Sun Hung Kai Properties, Wharf Group, Kerry Properties, Nan-fung Group, Cheung Kong Holdings, Hutchison-Whampoa, New World Development, and Henderson Land Development.

GTECH extends Beijing lottery contract

Rhode Island, May 11 (SYS-CON Media) - GTECH Holdings announced it signed a three-year contract extension to supply the Beijing Welfare Lottery Center (BWLC) with a new online lottery central system, new lottery terminals, and ongoing software licensing and support.

The contract extension runs through December 31, 2015, with three one-year extensions beyond that date.

GTECH has provided lottery products and services to BWLC since its inception in 2000. BWLC's sales have grown to US\$255 million in 2005.

Sina net falls, CEO quits

Beijing, May 10 (Reuters) - Chinese Internet firm Sina Corp. posted a quarterly earnings slide of 32 percent after a slump in mobile services revenue.

Wang Yan, Sina's CEO resigned this week and is replaced

by Charles Chao, the firm's former CFO.

Shares of Sina gained 95 cents to US\$29.40 in after-hours trade following the report, reversing an earlier dip of 7 cents per share in the regular session on Nasdaq.



Traders in the S&P 500 futures pit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange shortly after the Fed made its interest rate announcement. (AFP Photo)

Fed leaves door open for further hikes

Washington, May 11 (AP) - The US Federal Reserve on Wednesday raised the federal funds rate to 5 percent, the highest in more than five years, and signaled it may pause to assess the impact of its string of rate hikes.

The funds rate, the interest that banks charge each other, stood at a 46-year low of 1 percent when the central bank began raising rates in June 2004 to keep inflation under control.

Analysts said the wording is a strong signal that the central bank will not raise rates at the next meeting on June 28-29. But analysts also said that if the economy does not slow as the Fed is forecast-

ing, then the central bank will hike rates one or possibly two more times later this year.

Commercial banks quickly followed the Fed announcement by raising their prime rate to a five-year high of 8 percent.

The overall US economy grew at a sizzling pace of 4.8 percent in the first three months, the fastest spurt for the gross domestic product in 2.5 years.

On inflation, the Fed said the surge in energy prices so far had had "only a modest effect on core inflation" with inflation expectations remaining contained.

China Mobile cuts Beijing cell phone rates

Beijing, May 10 (Reuters) - China Mobile, which controls about two-thirds of the mainland's cellular market, lowered its fees for the Beijing area effective this month.

The price reduction, which could be followed by a similar cut from smaller rival China Unicom Ltd., is a step toward charging only the caller and not the receiver of cellular phone calls.

GM supplies 3,435 transmissions for Beijing buses

Beijing, May 10 (AFX) - General Motors said it has supplied 3,435 automatic transmissions to Beijing Public Transport Holdings Ltd to be installed in the Chinese capital's city buses.

The first order for 1,110 units of the Torqmatic transmissions was received in early February with an additional order of 2,325 units awarded on April 28.

China plans to open 48 new airports

Beijing, May 10 (AP) - China plans to open 48 new airports over the next five years.

Beijing plans to spend 140 billion (US\$17.5 billion) on airports by 2010, more than it spent in the previous 15 years.

It will increase the number of airports from 142 to 190 by 2010, and then to 220 by 2020, according to Zhao Hongyuan, an official of the Civil Aviation Administration of China.



Beslan survivor treated with traditional Chinese therapies.

The traditional holistic approach of Chinese medicine is being used to heal the physical and mental scars of ten young victims of one of the worst terrorist outrages of recent years.

By Jiang Xubo

Ten children who survived the horrors of the terrorist siege in Russia's southern city of Beslan in 2004 are undergoing rehabilitation treatment this May at the tropical seaside resort of Sanya in south China's Hainan Province.

The children, whose ages range from nine to sixteen, still suffer from chest pains, headaches, insomnia and nightmares as well as carrying physical injuries two years on from their terrifying ordeal.

"I was always frightened and woke up at night before arriving here," said Dziova Zarina, a 14-year-old girl, who suffered slight paralysis in her right elbow joint when bullet fragments entered her right arm during the incident. "Traditional Chinese medicines and therapies like acupuncture and moxibustion, massage, medicated bath and ointments, help stimulate the children's blood circulation and help their recovery. The therapies might play a major role in the treatments," said Liu Dexi, president of Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital of Sanya City (TCMHSC) that was assigned by the Ministry of Health to provide the children with therapeutic assistance.

Traditional Chinese medicine and therapy are characterized by their holistic approach, unifying the human and natural world, and are seen as useful in the palliative treatment of mental suffering.

"Massage and acupuncture helps the children to relax and eases their minds," said Sa Ren, an acupuncturist at the TCMHSC.

"We think it is helpful to come here to get traditional Chinese therapy," said Tsogoev Alan, a

Russian doctor accompanying the children.

Western physical therapy is also part of the children's care.

"You know, some children are a bit scared of the pain caused by acupuncture and moxibustion," Liu said with laughter.

The treatments last for about three hours each morning from Monday to Saturday.

Activities such as studying Chinese Kungfu, planting coconuts, and swimming have been introduced to occupy the children's afternoons, and these to enhance the healing effects.

A special panel of some ten medical experts from the People's Hospital of Hainan and Liu's hospital drafted the treatment plans in conjunction with their Russian counterparts. The Chinese government will cover the cost of 1.6 million yuan (US\$200,000) for the one-month treatment.

"Their treatment embodies the traditional friendship and mutual trust between the Chinese and Russian people as well as the friendly co-operative relationship between the two governments," said Yin Li, an official with the International Affairs Department of China's Ministry of Health.

The two countries' health authorities signed a memorandum of understanding on the project last September, one year after the Beslan incident.

More than 30 Chechen militants besieged a middle school in Beslan, a town in the Republic of North Ossetia in southern Russia, taking more than 1,000 students, teachers and parents hostage in September 2004. The incident ended in bloodshed on the third day, leaving 331 people dead, including 186 children.

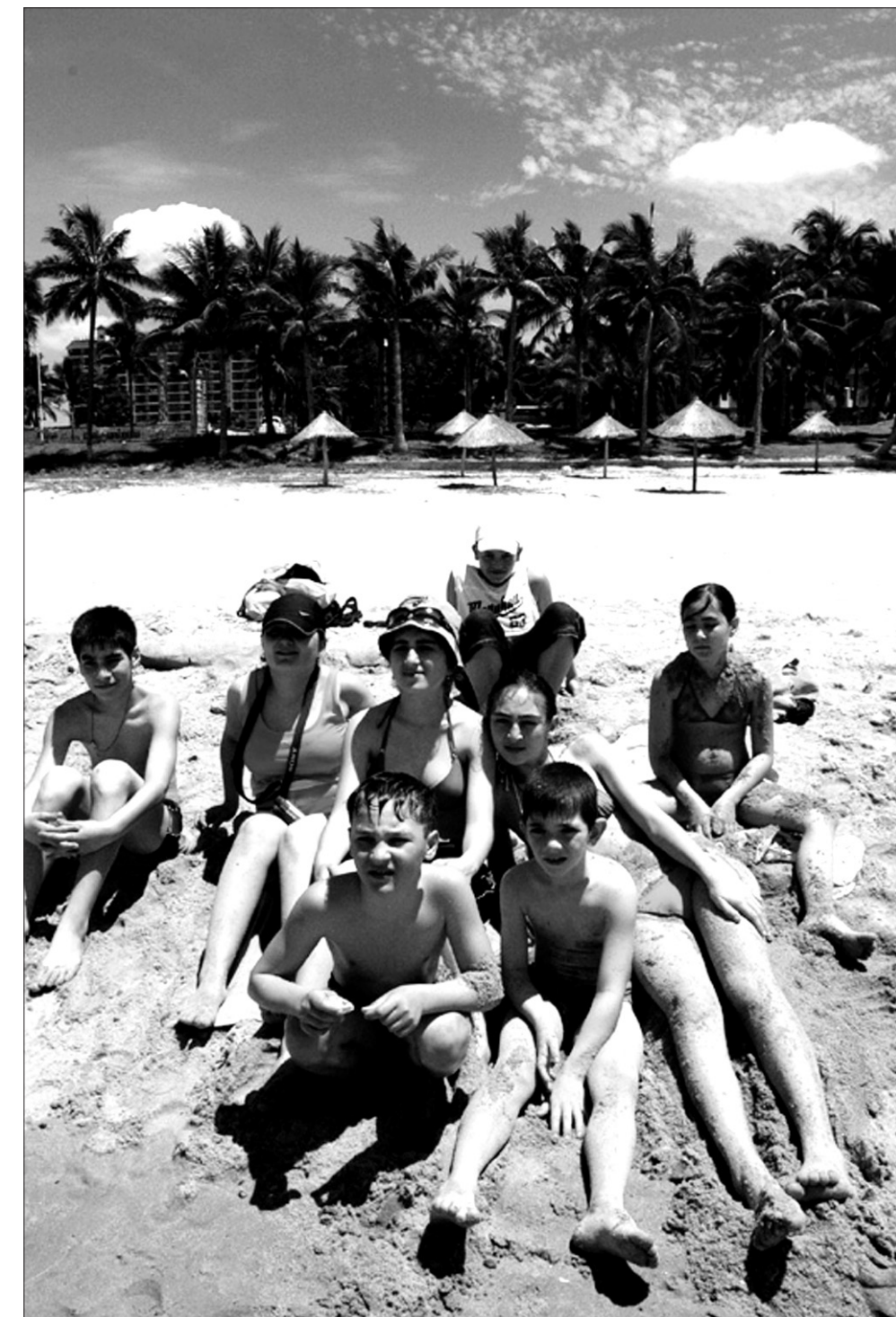
should not affect the work too seriously."

Ming artifacts

An official with the Beijing Cultural Relics Department, Liu Baoshan, declined to give a specific date for the tomb and said no details would be released until a final report is drawn up.

The tomb, found in early-May, is believed to date back five to six centuries to the Ming dynasty, and may belong to a eunuch who served at the imperial court. Archaeologists have found coins, ceramics and jade in the tomb at the shooting range on the capital's west Fifth Ring Road.

The construction site has been cordoned off and put under guard. The media have also been



Relaxing on the beach

Xinhua Photos

Olympic dig unearths Ming tomb

By Chu Meng

Work on a shooting range for the 2008 Beijing Olympics has been suspended after the discovery of an imperial-era tomb on the site, Yao Yujiang, an antiquities official from Beijing Cultural Relics Bureau confirmed Wednesday.

Chai Hua, a spokesman for the Beijing Olympic Committee said, "We will let everyone know if there is a major discovery. If the further finds indeed bear significant value, we might consider relocating the shooting range or Olympics, and we will consult with the International Olympic Committee."

Chai also stressed, "So far the find accounted for only a small part of the construction site and

kept away. Through the gate, a dozen or so workers could be seen busy in the square pits dug into an area on the edge of the construction site, where work otherwise appeared to have halted. Another 10 officials were wandering around the site. Guards said they were experts from Beijing Cultural Relics Bureau, and Beijing Olympic Committee. They refused to answer other questions and told the reporter to leave the area immediately.

Opportunity and challenge

Zhu Zhigang, an official with the Beijing Academy of Cultural Relics Studies, said "Beijing has been the site of imperial and other capitals for more than 1,000 years, and many major building

projects unearth graves or relics. Most are removed or destroyed before experts can examine them."

Zhu said that as early as May 21, 2004, a cluster of 48 ancient graves, dating from the Western Han dynasty (206 BC - AD 24) to the Qing dynasty (1644 - 1911), was also found at the site of the future Wukesong Cultural and Sports Center, about 20 kilometers west of Tiananmen Square. The center is one of the sites for the 2008 Games.

According to the Law on Cultural Relics Protection, archaeological investigation and excavation must be completed before any major construction project can be carried out. He said that as more major Olympic

venues are built around Beijing in the next few years, archaeologists would enjoy unprecedented opportunities for additional finds. They will also face the challenge of salvaging relics within the 3,000-year-old city.

"I am very glad to see the construction sector can team up with the cultural heritage protection departments to preserve these ancient treasures. They are the common heritage of all humanity," said Zhu.

The Beijing Cultural Relics Bureau and the Beijing Construction Command of the Olympic Venues have jointly issued a notice declaring that archaeological investigations must be carried out before gymnasiums and stadiums can be built.

A selection of the hottest online debates, bringing you views and insights about a whole range of issues that affect your day-to-day life.



Popular drinks in summer – but how can you be sure what's in them?

IC Photo

Waiter, what's this sulfite doing in my pint?

By David Fickling

As spring turns to summer, the mind naturally turns to thoughts of drink. And from drink it progresses to thoughts of drunkenness, and the eternal round of hangover, regret, and hasty vows.

Seasoned drinkers have long argued that the thumpiest hangovers are the byproduct not of alcohol, but of the chemical additives that are added to drinks to improve their shelf-life, appearance, taste and scent.

But sadly there's no way of proving it either way, because we don't have the right to know what goes into our alcoholic drinks. Wine manufacturers are actually forbidden by EU law from saying what's gone into their products.

This may shortly be redressed, thanks to EU plans to revise the labelling rules.

Isinglass, a form of gelatine made from the swim bladders of fish, is one of the most common additives used to clarify real ales.

If you're determined to avoid additives, you're probably best off moving to Germany, where far-sighted burghers introduced a law in 1516 mandating that beer could only be made from water, hops, and barley.

A selection of the hottest online debates, bringing you views and insights about a whole range of issues that affect your day-to-day life.

Comments

Actually, I regularly make red grape wine each autumn from vines I grow in the garden, and with or without using Camden tablets, each type seems equally capable of producing a wicked hangover if drunk in excess.

— Thomas Copyright
MMVI

From personal experience, smoke plays a far greater role in the severity of the hangover the next morning.

— MauMau

I suffer from sulphur allergy - and I believe it's fairly common.

Sodium metabisulphite is often used as a sterilising mixture for bottles, barrels and pipes.

It's also added to "kill" the yeast and halt fermentation.

Some pubs use it to clean the pipes, and often they are not too worried about complete rinsing - after all it's in the beer!

Roll on the day when this has to be labelled - can't see why it has to be a secret?

— johndigits

Err, thanks, but the sulfurous smell wasn't so much coming from the beer, but from the brewer!

— johndigits

The best anti-hangover remedy is to drink loads of water before you go to bed.

It helps counter the dehydrating effect of the alcohol on the brain.

It works for me (if I'm not too sloshed to remember to drink the water before crashing out).

— guzzidave

In Brazil you can buy anti-hangover tablets called 'Engov', which contain anti-histamine, vitamin C and a painkiller. Take two before starting to drink.

— lyszSzkot

English beer is a total disgrace and an insult to my princely palate with or without added shit. If you want to get rid of a hangover eat some fish, or try some smack.

— PierreLittbarski

(Guardian)

(Edited by Jiang Xubo)

Red card for FIFA in world cup

By Luke Harding

With less than one month to go until the World Cup a new scandal has broken out in Germany over the allocation of tickets. German prosecutors are investigating whether the German energy company EnBW broke the law by dishing out dozens of free tickets to politicians, businessmen, and other regional bigwigs.

The investigation has focused attention on the huge number of tickets being given to sponsors during next month's tournament, which begins on June 9 when the hosts Germany take on Costa Rica in Munich. Some 21 official sponsors have ended up with 450,000 tickets - while the vast majority of ordinary fans have come away with nothing.

Since German prosecutors

began their inquiries, meanwhile, lots of recipients of sponsors' tickets have given them back. The Berliner Zeitung this morning speculated that the sponsors' areas of the stadium during the World Cup's 64 games could be embarrassingly empty, while thousands of ordinary fans fail to make it inside the ground.

'Far too many tickets have been given to sponsors. That's the main problem,' said Matthias Bettag, spokesman for Germany's Alliance of Active Football Fans. 'The fans have no real chance of getting their hands on tickets. The tickets are play things which allow firms to do their business.'

The ticketing for next month's World Cup is a mess. Isn't it time for someone other than FIFA to take over?

(Guardian)

Comments

We should get a private ticketing firm in like Virgin tickets instead of these incompetent pseudo public corporations....

— jonfanning

Why don't they just put ALL the tickets on eBay? Everyone for every game at the same time. Problem solved.

— danmadrid

FIFA is run by idiots. The only people I know who have tickets to the world cup have sponsors' tickets. If you want real football bring your jumper to the park this evening... we'll start up our own football association and charge the twats in Switzerland and soho square with bringing the game into disrepute. Hallelujah!

— jaypee

Well, this kind of stuff has always happened in the past. Its unfair to blame the Germans for this as every country has done this before. It certainly does feel like you need

to be someone special to get to see these events live these days, especially if it is close to the final of a tournament.

By the way, putting the tickets on eBay is a terrible idea! People are selling tickets for nearly twice the price. That really is daylight robbery.

— dv42ouk

I am German and must admit that the ticketing system unfortunately really is rubbish. It is very unlikely that you won't get access to the stadium with a ticket bought on eBay or at a ticket scalper. As this is the only rational way to buy tickets - as demand (20mn+ tickets) exceeds supply heavily (3mn) - just go ahead!

— JonesGer

More importantly if you do get tickets, sausages and wiessbier are banned.

The only food in the stadiums allowed is sponsors food, Macdonalds and Budwieser.

— jonfanning

Top Topics This Week

New York Times

1. Kaavya Viswanathan
2. Immigration and Refugees
3. Supreme Court
4. Zacarias Moussaoui
5. George W. Bush
6. United Nations
7. Abortion
8. Harvard University
9. Stephen Colbert
10. Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi

Washington Post

- Money and Politics
- It's All Just a Little Bit of History Repeating
- An expert is quoted as saying "that every 10 years or so there is an episode" of seri-

ous handwringing over the corrupting influence of lobbying on politicians.

Seems to me these periods happen more like every 12 to 16 years, and coincide rather neatly with midterm elections. Going back to the early 1960s, ethics take center stage every few midterms.

Newsweek

1. How AIDS Transformed a Nation.
2. Intelligence: Goss Goes Out - But the CIA's Struggles Go On
3. Hirsh: World Faces Devastating Energy Wars.
4. The Crisis in Black America.



Plant oil powers Landrover from Holland to China



Johan Roos (left) and Sander Ansems with the Landrover

Photo by Lu Jiaozuo

By Chu Meng

Two Dutch students drove a Landrover Discovery, mostly powered by plant oil and emitting no carbon dioxide, 29,000-kilometers from the Netherlands to Beijing this Tuesday. "As long as there are supermarkets, as long as they sell home-cooking oil, we can drive the car away," the boys said.

Interesting journey

When the day's rain washed away the dust from every city road, a dusty Landrover Discovery arrived at the Dutch Embassy in Beijing at half past two in the afternoon. Johan Roos, 23, and his partner Sander Ansems, 22, jumped out of the car. Many logos such as "I love biofuel!" and "Own eyes experience!" were stuck all over the car.

To promote environmental protection, Johan said, with a bottle of champagne in hand, "Sander and I took out one year from studies at university to

prepare and make the journey. We spent about 3,000 euros to adjust the engine system. We linked two fuel tanks to the engine, one is for diesel oil, and the other is for pure plant oil. The engine has to be started by diesel oil to warm up. Once everything is running well, the pure plant oil tank is switched on to power the engine."

"In most countries, we recharged the tank with plant oil buying it from supermarkets wherever we arrived. Sometimes peanut oil, sometimes sunflower oil. On average, the price is one euro per liter, much cheaper than diesel. Ironically, the situation was totally opposite in Iran, where gas and diesel were unbelievably cheap, but plant oil was about eight euros per liter," he said.

They left from the city of Leeuwarden on January 3, passing through Italy, Turkey, Iran, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, entering

China from Xinjiang province. Spending eight weeks driving through the country, they passed the cities of Dunhuang, Lanzhou, Chengdu, and then arrived in Beijing this morning.

"The purpose is not to show off," said Sander, "We want to make more people aware, especially, youngsters, of the importance and the urgency of protecting the environment by reducing polluting emissions. It is our only journey, because it is all that we can. We chose China as the only destination, because the problems here are very serious."

Feasibility doubts

Ouyang Minggao, an expert from the Academy of Auto Industry of China, said, "One-time-use resources, which are also known as non-renewable resources such as petroleum, are a problem because eventually they run out. Eventually we will have to switch from using non-renewable resources to using renewable resources."

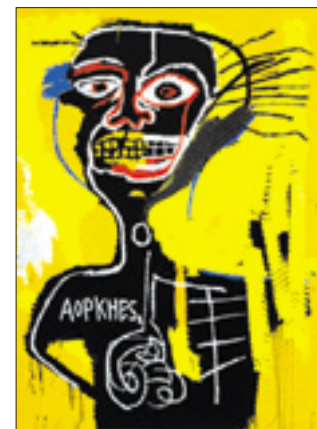


"The obvious substitutes for petroleum are plant oils and fats because they have the same base chemical structure as petroleum. Unfortunately, they are not as valuable compared to the prices of diesel and plant oil in China. Besides, plant oil has two problems: It does not explode like gasoline, and it can absorb water, which can cause oxidation, rust and corrosion."

He explained that fossil fuels were plants once, millions of years ago, and so it makes sense that both the fossil fuels we use today and oils produced by plants are chemically similar. Both are made up of chains of chemicals known as hydrocarbons.

A hydrocarbon is a carbon atom surrounded by hydrogen atoms. Gasoline varies from seven to 10 hydrocarbons long. The shorter the chain of carbons, the more explosive the fuel is, and the more power it offers an engine.

"The problem is that plant oils are 14 to 18 carbons in length. Diesel fuel is 15 carbons long, which is close to the same size as plant oils. That is why the first applications are as biodiesel fuel. You could not burn vegetable oils in today's gasoline engines because their hydrocarbon chains are too long. The possibility exists to make a type of plant gasoline from plant oils that have shorter carbon chains." He said.



Jean-Michel Basquiat's works

Graffiti in the Forbidden City

By Chu Meng

If you are sitting around trying to figure out what to do in Beijing this month, why not head to the Museum of the Imperial City, which is just next to the Forbidden City inside Changpuhe Park, to check out the Basquiat Retrospective. It's a fantastic way to get lost for an hour or two, to recharge your creative juices, surrounded by Jean-Michel Basquiat's great graffiti.

Jean-Michel Basquiat was an American graffiti artist, born in 1960 and turned into an avant-garde wunderkind. He died of a heroin overdose at the age of 27 in 1988. He was a 1980s art star whose rise and fall were rapid, dramatic, and emblematic of the era. A rebel, high-school dropout, and part of the downtown New York scene, he was influenced by the violence of street life, the variety of African-American life, multiculturalism, and the emerging hip-hop culture.

He was also strongly influenced by the life and work of Andy Warhol, who became his mentor, and by the work of such artists as Picasso, Matisse, and Cy Twombly. Basquiat started as a graffiti artist, making images and writing slogans on the walls of buildings. By the early years of the 21st century, he was hailed as one of the finest American neoexpressionists of his era.

Kick-off for Beijing's 'World Cup'

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Football teams from 16 countries have entered the Hiboo 2006 International Cup, the local 'World Cup', which kicks off this Saturday at Dongguantou Football Ground, Fengtai District.

The players are composed of staff from embassies in Beijing, overseas students and staff from international companies. There will be 16 matches between eight teams from May 13th to June 10th. The teams include: China, USA, Mexico, the Netherlands, Ivory Coast, Malaysia, France and South Korea.

Although this is just an amateur football match, all the procedures are set according to the World Cup rules. Hiboo International Group, the competition sponsor, has prepared the cup, mascot and balls for the match. Wang Wei, a director from the organizers, Beijing Golden Spring Autumn Sport & Culture Exchange Center, said "We will play the countries' national anthems before each match, which will make this whole event more formal."

There will be a barbeque and beers served at the tournament, which is open to all.

The Match Schedule

Date	Time	Teams
May 13th	11:00-13:00	US vs Malaysia
May 13th	13:00-15:00	France vs Mexico
May 13th	15:00-17:00	South Korea vs Ivory Coast
May 13th	17:00-19:00	Netherlands vs China
May 20th	11:00-13:00	Netherlands vs US
May 20th	13:00-15:00	France vs South Korea
May 20th	15:00-17:00	Mexico vs Ivory Coast
May 20th	17:00-19:00	China vs Malaysia
May 27th	13:00-15:00	China vs US
May 27th	15:00-17:00	France vs Cote Di'Ivoire
May 27th	17:00-19:00	Mexico vs South Korea
May 28th	15:00-17:00	Netherlands vs Malaysia

Making your own jewelry

By Annie Wei

As an expatriate living in Beijing, jewelry markets like Hongqiao and Yaxiu hold few surprises. Pearls and other kinds of jewelry stones are perfect items to bring home as gifts. However, for ladies, the jewelry styles from these places have serious drawbacks: too plain, too similar and too old fashioned.

Janice Chong is currently the only jewelry designer who teaches handmade jewelry making in the expat community. Her jewelry making course in Lidu Country Club started this week.

Beginners

In the course for beginners, Chong teaches the basic skills of jewelry making, including different kinds of material, how to make pieces, where to get materials, and rough prices. Armed with this knowledge, students will be able to start crafting their own jewelry.

Born in Malaysia and educated in Australia, Chong has lived in Beijing for four and a half years. Chong finds an abundant supply of jewelry materials, especially natural stones and pearls in China. "I have always been in fashion. When I came to Beijing, I decided to focus on jewelry design," Chong said. Chong's design studio is in Beijing, and the jewelry she designs is sold in other countries.

Hobby

Her girlfriends liked Chong's designs and asked her to teach them. Two years ago, Chong started a small jewelry making course among friends. The course in Lidu Country Club is a sign that more people want to take up this hobby.

Some of Chong's students are mothers of kids in the International School of Beijing. When they go to pick up their children, they wear jewelry they learned to make on Chong's course. Two weeks ago, Chong started a similar course for the teachers in the ISB.

Students

Chong has had around 80 students now. However, the course that began on Wednesday is the last one for this spring. Chong explained that she has other work in her design studio, and has to go to markets to look for materials, as well as taking care of her son on the weekend.

"I only have courses in spring and autumn and I do not teach on the weekend," Chong said, "The course for the autumn is not scheduled yet, but normally it is one week after the school semester starts."



Dave Beckstead (left) and Matt Roberts

Photos by Tian Yufeng

Dave Bidini rocks Beijing

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Canadian singer and writer Dave Bidini appeared in Bookworm, the bar and library in Sanlitun South Street, this Monday evening. He shared his books and music with international rock fans.

Wearing his trademark black hat, Dave told tales of his tour in China and read chapters of his most recent book, *The Best Game You Can Name*. The humorous description from his experiences and performances in Ireland and Hong Kong roused laughter again and again. Many of his tales are about hockey, which was the subject of his previous book *Tropic of Hockey*.

An acoustic performance followed. Two bass players in Beijing, Matt Roberts and Dave Beckstead, immediately volunteered to join Dave and his partner. The music also represented Dave's witty style. Songs like *Ain't Any Good*, and *Horse* were played and brought a wave of shaking and rocking. The fans there were mainly from Canada, the youngest just six or seven years old.

The talk and performance was the last stop of Dave's ten-day tour of eight Chinese cities: Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Nantong, Changsha, Guizhou and Kunming. The eight cities will be the subject

of his current book *Around the World in 80 Gigs*.

Dave is the rhythm guitar player for the popular Canadian rock Rheostatics. The band has released twelve albums to date, including *Music Inspired by the Group of Seven*, the soundtrack to the film *Whale Music* and *The Story of Harmelodia*, a children's album. In a millennial survey of Canadian music critics, the Rheostatics placed two albums – *Melville* and *Whale Music* – in the top ten Canadian records of all time, a feat duplicated only by the legendary *Guess Who*. Dave also starred in the Gemini Award-winning film *The Hockey Nomad*.



Hard Rock table soccer tournament, CBFA win

By Han Manman

2006 Hard Rock Cafe table soccer invitational tournament organized by China BabyFoot Association (CBFA) and Hard Rock Cafe took place last Saturday evening.

The teams from the International Table Soccer Federation (ITSF) Tour-China championship top four (double team players) challenged teams from Hard Rock Cafe top four.

CBFA player Jon Boon from America and Zhangyong from China won first place and 2,000 yuan.

Society of Art

By Annie Wei

A performance by French artist Fan Qihui (singing) and a book launch for Yang Yong were the event on May 6 in Cafe Pause Dashanzi during the Dashanzi Art Festival. Again, it assembled socialites, locals and expatriates in Beijing's art, fashion and show business, including magazine editors, gallery managers, artists, scholars, diplomats and their friends.



Andy Wouhol, a renowned artist from UK at the scene

Photo by Bliking

German governor woos Chinese entrepreneurs

By Wang Xiaoyuan

The 'Hessen: the gateway to Europe Investment Conference' was held this Wednesday and Thursday in Beijing.

Roland Koch, the governor of Hessen, and 35 directors from

27 enterprises in Germany, met with over 100 representatives from Chinese companies and enterprises.

The relationship between environmental technology, transportation management and sus-

tainable development of the economy was discussed at the conference. Mr. Koch gave delegates a brief introduction to the laws of international trade and other relevant regulations.

Hessen is the fifth largest

German state and one of Europe's largest financial centers. Some of China's biggest companies are located in the state, including chemical plants, auto manufacturers and two state industries.



Gabriele Menegatti (the middle) and the delegation of Sicily

By Wang Xiaoyuan

An exhibition documenting five thousand years of Sicilian history is on display at the National Museum of China. As an important part of the Year of Italy in China, the exhibition will be open until the end of June. Beijing visitors can learn about a civilization as ancient and deep as their own.

Around 150 items from the Stone Age to the renaissance are on display. Gabriele Menegatti, the Italian ambassador to China, said that Sicily was "the sea of us", "...and the sea is the birthplace of western civilization. Sicilians are very proud of their culture and history. And the exhibition has represented the process of the development of Italian civilization."

As many of the items on show are priceless, Chinese customs had to prepare a special channel for them to enter China. All the inspections and examinations were done under heightened security.

Guests who attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition included Salvatore Cuffaro, the president of the region of Sicily, Lu Zhangshen, the curator of the National Museum, and Antonino Laspina, the director of the Italian Commerce and Economy Committee. Bands from Sicily performed traditional Sicilian folk music and dances.

Sicilian artefacts displayed in Beijing



A crater goblet, 500 BC

Photo by He Jing

French youth choir bring wealth of song

By Chen Shasha

The Lyon Children's Choir, one of the best children's choirs in France, was invited by the France Alliance to China this month to perform in major cities across the country. On their last stop, they performed three

shows in the Forbidden City concert hall in Beijing.

The Lyon Children's Choir has 85 members, aged from 12 to 18. In Beijing, they sang songs in different styles, including traditional French ballads and American jazz. Different from Chinese

choirs, the Lyon Children's Choir performed songs that combined music and drama.

Famed for singing in the Oscar-winning film, *Les Choristes*, the Lyon Children's Choir also performed songs from the hit film.

Ambassador to teach Cuban culture

By Han Manman

Cuban ambassador, Alberto R Arufe, will give a lecture in Spanish at 2 pm on May 17 at the Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU). It is open to all who are interested in learning about Cuban culture.

Address: room 213 Yifu Building, East Campus of Beijing Foreign Studies University

Exploring the world of Scandinavian film

By Han Manman

The Norwegian and Swedish embassies will hold a Nordic Film Festival at the Hart Art Center in Beijing from May 13 until May 19. Top Swedish director Pal Hollender will take center stage at the festival when he introduces his film *United States of Afghanistan* before taking questions from the Chinese audience on May 13 at 3:30pm and May 17 at 7:30pm.

The festival will present nine films from Scandinavia including the award-winning films *My Body* and *All about My Father*.

My Body is a documentary about body and identity. It is a 26 minutes short film about director Margreth Olin's relationship with her own body and how other women shape a woman's view of their bodies. *My body* got the award for best short film at the Norwegian Short Film Festival this year. It also won an Amanda Prize for best Norwegian documentary at Haugesund International Film Festival in 2002.

All about My Father is a personal documentary about a well-respected doctor and transvestite in a small Christian town, directed by the one person most likely to convey his story with warmth, humour and irony - his son. Armed with a small video camera, and with the use of old nostalgic Super-8mm family footage, he set out to make a personal portrait of his transvestite father. The film has won several prestigious awards since it premiered, including Best Documentary at the Berlin Film Festival in 2002.

Where: Hart Center of Art No. 4 Jiu Xian Qiao Road, Dashanzi Art District. **Tel:** 64353570

Tokyo Symphony Orchestra on in town

By Han Manman

At the invitation of the China Ministry of Culture and the Japanese Embassy, the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra will put on a show tonight at the Poly Theatre to celebrate its 60th anniversary. It is the second time the orchestra has come to Beijing since 1986.

Founded in 1946, the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra has become Japan's leading orchestra and has performed many works from top Japanese and international composers. The orchestra will perform a number of traditional pieces from Japan, Russia, America and Italy. Tonight's performance, which kicks off at 7:30pm, will include; String Requiem; No. 2 Violin Concerto, by Tchaikovsky; *Overture Figaro Wedding*, by Mozart and Symphonies No 4 in F minor by Tchaikovsky.

PTA Spring Fair on Saturday May 13

By Annie Wei

The International School of Beijing (ISB) in Shunyi District will hold a PTA (Parent-Teacher-Association) Spring Fair this Saturday.

"It will be a day of fun for the entire community," said Melinda Tyack, the school's marketing coordinator.

The spring fair is a community event and is the only fundraiser held each year by the ISB PTA.

Ms. Tyack said that thousands of people had flocked to the last few fairs.

There will be a host of activities to enjoy on the day for children, parents and teachers, including games with prizes, an arts and crafts bazaar where over 50 vendors will have their products on sale, international food tables selling exotic delicacies made by ISB parents, outside food vendors selling everything from candy apples and home-baked breads. The Booster Club will also be selling drinks and used books.

Organizers are providing a free shuttle bus for families from the surrounding villas. The fair, which is being held at the ISB campus, will begin at 10 am and finish at 4 pm.

Hundreds attend end of semester concert

By Annie Wei

The International School of Beijing (ISB) held a semester concert by its high school pupils on Wednesday evening. Around 120 students performed to an audience of around 300 people, including students, parents, friends and teachers.

Adam Lee, who helped organize the event, said it had been a great night.

"We put on many concerts throughout the school year and Wednesday night's was as good as ever," he said. "It's great to be able to provide students with the opportunity to perform in front of an audience."

The students spent four months preparing for the concert. Four different groups played on the night including a band, choir, and orchestra. Music varied from rock 'n' roll to march music.



Foreign students playing in the new building of Lecheng International School

Photo by Wu Ning

As expatriate numbers in the city continue to grow and wealthy Chinese increasingly look to western-style schooling for their children, demand for places has rocketed...

International schools in building boom

By Tom Mackenzie

The increasing popularity of Beijing's international schools has led to a massive building boom with at least three new campuses set to open this August.

As expatriate numbers in the city continue to grow and as wealthy Chinese increasingly look to western-style schooling for their children, demand for places has rocketed.

Keen to cash in, a multi-million dollar building spree was launched earlier this year by some of the capital's most popular schools with new buildings and campuses set to open in August for the new academic year.

The British School of Beijing is building a new campus in Shunyi for children aged three to 16-years-old. It will include sports pitches, tennis courts, a

250-meter swimming pool and even a rooftop basketball court.

"It looks like it's going to be quite an impressive campus when it opens," said Darren Brown, the school's marketing chief. "Our current building in Sanlitun is also expanding to provide more facilities for the children. It should all be ready for the next school year."

The Western Academy of Beijing (WAB), one of the capital's biggest international schools, has also embarked on an extensive building project.

It is extending its Shunyi campus to include a new high school that will take its pupil numbers to around 14,500.

"As more and more families have moved to Beijing we've had so much demand," said Angela Snowball, WAB's community

relations manager. "The parents have wanted high school facilities for some time and this is what the new campus will provide. Next year is going to be a very big year for us."

Education expert Echo Chen, from Wiseway educational consultants, said she expected demand for international schools to continue.

"Since Beijing is the capital city and the economic and cultural center of China, more and more foreign investors are coming to the city and bringing their children with them," she said. "There are also increasing numbers of Chinese parents who want their children to have an education abroad so they think it's a good idea to get them enrolled in an international school here to give them a taste of what to expect."

Charity talent contest

By Tom Mackenzie

A Pop Idol-style talent contest will kick off at the Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) tonight in a bid to raise thousands of yuan for charity.

Wannabe stars from the

school will perform songs and dance routines to an audience of over 100 pupils, staff and parents at the WAB Idol Hidden Talent Contest, the first of its kind.

"There are some really talented kids here, we have a very

strong arts program, so we're expecting it to be a great night," said Angela Snowball, the school's community relations manager. "Hopefully we can also raise lots of money for charity. And if the night is a success I'm sure we

will stage the event again in the future."

The talent contest kicks off at 6pm tonight (Friday) and is open to staff, parents, pupils and other members of the school community only.



South African Ambassador Ndumiso Ntshinga (left) and He Yafei, a Chinese official



Kabelo Matlaletsa(left), South African Embassy Counsellor; General Sindane, South African Defence Attache; Master Sindane; Vusi Koloane, South African Embassy Minister

South African Freedom Day celebrations in Beijing



South African Ambassador Ndumiso Ntshinga

On Thursday April 27, South African citizens and friends celebrated 12 years of freedom in Beijing. Following a speech by South African Ambassador Ndumiso Ntshinga, guests got to savor South African cuisine and the finest wine from South Africa's wine region. Cultural song and dance group, K-Cap, who were especially flown in from South Africa, provided the entertainment.

As sponsor of the South African Freedom Celebrations Photo Page, THE BEIJING AXIS would like to thank and congratulate the South African Embassy for the event's success.



K-Cap Cultural Group



Pieter Snyman(left), THE BEIJING AXIS Africa Business Development Manager; Craig Allen, Embassy of the United States of America Minister-Counsellor; Kobus van der Wath, THE BEIJING AXIS Managing Director



Andries Mellet(left); Schoeman Du Plessis, South African Embassy Counsellor; Michael Jones, THE BEIJING AXIS Consultant



South African Ambassador and his wife, Ndumiso and Camagwini Ntshinga

Photos provided by THE BEIJING AXIS



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Heavy aesthetics

By Gareth George

Sitting in ChongWen Starbucks, Max Zago is talking about the oasis beneath the Grand Hyatt. Inca effect brickwork, waterfalls, palm trees. "It's amazing to live in a hotel, man," he says. His thick fingers negotiate the tiny espresso, "Anything you want, 24 hours. And if you're lucky like me, everybody pays for you." A man in sunglasses interrupts us. "Sorry to bother you, but I'm a film director," Max shrugs. "It's so difficult to find big...mean looking guys," the director laughs nervously. "So what do you do here?" "I'm a shoe designer," Max tells him. "Oh," says the director. Max watches him leave. "You think he was gay?" he whispers. "You wouldn't believe the number of gay guys who approach me."

In the English Premier League, anytime you see Everton's Chinese winger Li Tie run onto the field, he's wearing Li Ning boots designed by Venetian Max Zago and his team. In fact, Max has a hand in the design of almost all of Li Ning's shoes. Li Ning are perhaps the biggest sporting goods company in China right now, bigger here than even Nike and Adidas.

"Being a designer is like being a chef. If you have good fantasy, you can always create beautiful things, but you must love what you do." Max leans forward, "I can't be at home more than three or four days – I want to go design. I give myself, my staff freedom. If you want someone to write a beautiful song, you don't put him in a room and tell him to write, you let him go to Thailand or the mountains or wherever he feels peaceful."

Creative

At the moment, Max is working on the design brief schedule for the Spring/Summer 2008 season. First they see what sold well last season, "If red was popular, we aren't going to change it to blue just to be different." Then Max and his designers meet, relax and talk about ideas with their sketches, pictures, or magazines. Later in the process, they'll meet



Max Zago, with the boot he created for Chinese star Li Tie

Photo by Ruggero Rossi

again with samples of colors, fabrics, materials and stitching, even popular competitor's shoes. "It takes about three months worth of design work for one shoe before we go to our R&D center in Guangdong to see how we can create them."

George W. Bush

When Max was young he started body building like his hero Arnold Schwarzenegger. "He was strong, big, powerful and rich.

Many people who come out of sports don't make a success in business. He was the only one. I really admire him." Max is nearly 40 now, but he still goes to the gym five times a week. "Actually I met Arnold two months ago in the Hyatt," he says. "He was there with all these bodyguards. I tried to speak to him, the bodyguards said 'no way', but I wasn't going to miss this chance. So I shouted 'Arnold!' He came over, we had a photo taken

together...actually, George Bush was there too, but I don't give a shit about him. If he said 'Max, can I have a photo with you?' I'd tell him 'no'."

In Italy, Max started his career designing cars. "It didn't pay so good, so I went to Treviso, where all the sports brands are – Benetton, Lotto, Diadora, Fila, Adidas – and knocked on the doors one by one until Diadora offered me a job. I designed football boots for Baggio and Van

Basten." After five years, Nike came calling. "They took me to Oregon for the weekend, and I moved there." It was the same job but this time he was designing for Brazilian superstars like Romario and Ronaldo. "I have to have a close relationship with the players. I went to Ronaldo's home many times and he was a beautiful guy and a great athlete." For Max, designing football boots is where it's at. "They're exciting because they have to be so efficient scientifically, even the mould of the player's foot costs US\$200,000. You can play basketball with any shoes, but not football. My job is to bring the color and the passion to represent the way the great players play." Max continues, "With my Ronaldo boots for Nike, I thought about Brazil, the music, the color. And the flag is blue, green and yellow, so we had a blue boot with yellow stitching. Traditionally boots had always been black until then, but he was a young guy, fast and exciting, so...actually he hated some of the first pale blue ones I suggested – he thought they were for girls."

First love

Max has been in China for six years now, three years permanently. He's seen big changes in his Chinese designers. "They are more culturally aware now, and they were always curious, friendly, smart and honest. And so, their skills improve very fast." Recently, he was involved in his company's 'Olympics'. Max won the shot put, but fell over and finished last in the 100 meters. "I hope it wasn't the shoes!" he laughs.

"China has more freedom than Europe now. It's the country for me. Even if the roads are bumpy when I take my car or my moto out." Cars have always been Max's first love. "But now designing them is not so fun because of all the safety restrictions and crash tests and things. To be a car designer in the 1970s, that would have been perfect. For Ferrari of course," he says, "Hey – I'm Italian."

My first sex scene

By Jonathan 'Cao Cao' Kos-Read

I play white guys on stupid Chinese soap operas.

Usually it's some exec who falls for a Chinese girl - she's got a Chinese boyfriend, she's torn for ten episodes, finally she makes the right choice, I go home empty handed. So I do a lot of kissing scenes, usually to show the girl is 'bad'. But never a sex scene.

So when I got this script I was surprised. And, truthfully, kind of nervous.

The script said, "They embrace and have passionate sex." Now, an average shooting day is sixteen hours. A sex scene, as a night scene, is probably scheduled last. 'Hmm', I thought, 'my feet are gonna stink'. I imagined us locked in passionate embrace, sheets a-tangle, the crew bright eyed and panting. Suddenly the actress says, "Wait a minute, what's that rotting smell?" I sit up and say, "Yeah, I smell it too! What is that?!" while everybody snickers.

The girl, Liu Li a sort of B level TV star, was nervous too. Chinese actresses rarely do sex scenes. The way I figured, this scene was problematic because, while deep down, she might not give a crap, she has to appear to. She has to whine so people won't say, "Look at her gaggin' to get with a *laowai*." And they will too, so I figured it was just a matter of the director

'coercing' her into it.

The only people not nervous were the crew. I came downstairs on the morning and there were a lot of people at breakfast.

"Up pretty early," I said.

"Yeah, we want to see you have sex with Liu Li," they all said with big toothy grins.

So, gum, soap, and extra socks in hand, I got on the bus and headed to set. "She's probably just gaggin' to get with a *laowai*," I heard one of the make-up girls giggle.

Fifteen hours later, it was time for the sex scene.

I ran off to the bathroom with my soap and socks. After our garlic and onion dinner I was chewing extra gum so there I was jawin' away on six sticks of Wrigley's, shoes off, foot up in the sink, elbow-greasin' away on fifteen hours of foot stinkiness. A couple people knocked to use the bathroom. "Just takin' a crap," I yelled. Finally, feet shiny pink, I slipped on new socks. But now, a problem. How could I pick up my discarded, putrid socks from the floor? I was a little embarrassed already so didn't want to leave them but could imagine grabbing them then Liu Li turning green as my filthy hand rubbed fifteen hours of sock into her face. So I tweezed them up with two fingers, threw them out the window then washed my hands



Cao Cao

again.

I ran out and the cinematographer said, "Cao Cao, it's a wide shot; put your shoes on."

Oh well.

The lights were up, camera ready to roll and the crew breathlessly clustered around the monitor. I was supposed to come up, tell her I loved her then we'd hesitantly move together until the first shuddering brush of our lips released a passion avalanche.

"Action!"

I slid up and gave her my, 'I-love-you-and-I-am-a-tender-but-strong-guy' look from my 'important-and-often-used-looks' repertoire. She gave me her, 'I-love-you-but-am-easily-hurt-and-so-trying-to-be-strong' look from hers. Then, we went for the smackeroo. Halfway there, her mouth started twitching "Uh-oh," I thought. Then, bam, she started laughing.

We cut and restarted. Bam, again she busted out the giggles. "I can do this! I can do this," she said.

"Action!"

Lip-locked now, we writhed around on the couch for about half a minute and then . . . what next? Kissing scenes are simple, move in, tongue around then pull out. But this was foreplay and she hadn't laughed so I didn't want to ruin the shot. I thought maybe this was where I'd wrench myself up and carry her into the bedroom. I tried to get my arms under her. Legs were no problem but her head was harder. Watch closely when the show gets broadcast. She grimaces as I rip off a huge hair gob getting my arm behind her. Stopped her laughing though.

I staggered up, ready to explode forward with a devastatingly passionate kick to the bedroom door but I couldn't see because her hair was in my face. I got too close so when I kicked, lost my balance and cut my foot and so, bleeding foot, wounded pride and blind, fell into the bedroom and . . .

That was it! Liu Li said she was too embarrassed to continue and the director, not wanting to piss her off because she's a star, bowed to the inevitable and agreed. And thus, all that build up and no climax.

Who knows, maybe she was embarrassed; or maybe it was just my feet.

Beijing Daye

Sun, sand and holiday week

By Edmund Backhouse

I did my usual thing for the May Day holiday - largely nothing. A few years here in Beijing have taught me the error of any fool thought of joining the mad rush out of town if actual relaxation is any part of your plan. Back home I'd have at least made it to a trade union march on the day itself, but as I couldn't find one here, I spent my Golden Week hanging round coffee bars pursuing the feckless life of the freelancer.

One of my favourite haunts is run by two Mongolian brothers. As well as serving the best cup of coffee in the most convivial atmosphere on Nanluoguxiang, they're working to put together a sustainable tourism project that will take travellers up to visit their home in the grasslands of Inner Mongolia.

It's early days yet. The younger of the brothers took a small party trekking during the May holiday, only the second trip they've organised. It was just himself and a couple of the ex-pats who will be partners in the project. On their first visit they'd identified local nomad families able to train horses suitable for trekking and to provide other services; this time they were testing out the rides and generally seeing how feasible it all is. The nomad families are getting paid directly at a decent rate to do work they enjoy, so that's a good start.

The idea is to have a positive impact on local life, economically, culturally and environmentally. The fact that the project is run by people originally from the area makes this more likely to happen in a sensitive way. I've seen a fair few 'ecotourism' projects in China that seemed to proceed from the idea that building a hotel and karaoke complex up a mountain or somewhere else scenic is all it takes to make a holiday 'green'. The brothers' ultimate hope is to create an ecological cultural center, a place where writers and artists from the city can create in a natural environment and play a part in its restoration.

The grasslands are in a parlous state. The damage is often ascribed to the erroneous policies of the collective era, but I understand the destruction was already well underway in the Nationalist period. The problem is arable farming in country that should have been left as rangeland, the soil upturned by incomers from the over-populated, land-hungry interior. The consequences of this are apparent not just to the people struggling to make good lives for themselves there, but for us in Beijing too. Much of the hundreds of thousands of tons of sand dumped on the city during the recent storms was picked up as the winds swept across the deserts that were once the wide pastures of the Golden Horde.

In bed with Beijing

A taxi driver

By David Drakeford

A testament perhaps to Beijing life, I had realised that I no longer look at the face of my taxi driver when he, or on occasion she, shuttles me across the city streets. Today this was all going to change; today I would really get to know the man behind the wheel.

I hailed a taxi on the far side of a moving bus. The driver made a bee-line for the curb, displacing the full-to-bursting vehicle and ground-

ing a further innocent cyclist. This was the driver who was soon to take me across a large and chaotic city at great speed.

He had a low number on his registration card, too low. Years of negotiating the streets had taken their toll. His driving was moderately scary but the stops were worse: lack of stimulation caused him to rattle his metal cage a few times. To get my attention, I felt.

"So... what time did you start work?" I hazarded.

"6 o'clock start, 12 o'clock finish."

"Six hours a day?"

"Eighteen."

He noticed that the taxi in front had a flat tire and honked his horn but the warning was lost in an orchestra of cab calls. He persisted, even running a red light to try and help his taxi-brethren.

"Where are you from? England? Ah, a gentleman!" he reasoned before directing a burst of the basest possible language at a private car.

He missed the exit to my road and dutifully thumped the meter off, soon the G-force of a sharp left turn led us back the right way. I was left on the kerb, hoping that the looming taxi price hike could translate somehow into some rest and relaxation time for these stressed deliverers of fragile human cargo, but with so many other claims on the 0.4 RMB per kilometer proposed it seemed unlikely that 000486 would be getting much soon.

Blog

Turning over new leaves

By Pomegranate

My orange tree has been a disappointing offspring and I have been neglecting him. Don't get me wrong, I always make sure there's water in the bowl, it's me that had to move him away from the freezing cold glass planes during the winter months... I have not been derelict.

His oranges rained down like tears in January through Feb when the light provided by my poxy balcony failed to nourish him and I, I in my blinded adoration, had imag-

ined they might grow back!

No, they will grow back next year. It is a long-term commitment and responsibility is not a facile board game we can shove onto a high and dusty shelf when it no longer amuses us.

The recent change in climate has, blessedly, given my tree the boost that he was probably expecting all along and he stretches out casually to receive the warmth and glow of the sun's rays.

Some ragged leaves still hang from his branches and

I feel inclined to brush them out for the sake of his appearance. Perhaps a gentle shaking will rid him of some of these hangers-on and any leaf that is still providing sustenance will be drained for a while longer.

Not until now, perhaps, had I realised the vain pride of my trees appearance. As his stature and color flourish I feel the need to show him off - neighbors will find themselves invited in for a friendly drink and a look at the nipper.



The beloved orange tree

Visa fines on the up

By Annie Wei

Ever since China began issuing different types of visas to foreigners in 1986, the number of expatriates to Beijing has increased year on year.

And the number of expatriates being fined for having out-of-date visas has also increased. According to local authorities, over 400 Beijing expatriates were fined 500 to 5,000 yuan for expired visas in March. That is an increase of 57 percent from last year.

Liu Jiewei, an officer from the Exit and Entry Management Section of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, said there were two main reasons for the massive increase in the number of people being fined for having out-of-date visas.

"Many foreign-born children who returned to China to live with their grandparents, were not aware of the regulations," Liu said.

In the 1980s, many Chinese immigrated to foreign countries and automatically gave up their Chinese nationality. Now, more and more parents who immigrated abroad are sending their children back to China and asking the grandparents to take care of them. And many parents don't realize that although their chil-

dren are ethnically Chinese, they are foreigners according to Chinese law and can only stay in China with a proper visa.

According to Liu, the second main reason is that many foreigners do not realize that an expired visa is illegal. "Many think it's not a big deal because it's not a crime," he said.

Liu added that in most circumstances the PSB would issue people with a warning if their visa had been expired for less than ten days.

"They need to give us a proper explanation as to why they didn't validate their visa in time," said Liu. "Sometimes, if they give us a good reason, we will let it go. For example, if someone was sick and missed the deadline to re-validate his or her visa, and had no family in Beijing to help, we wouldn't fine them as long as they could provide a doctor's certificate."

Tip: When asked about those people who advertise as visa consultants, Liu suggested it would actually be cheaper to go straight to the Exit and Entry Bureau. The Exit and Entry Management Section of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau offers more than six types of foreign language service for visa consulting.

Chinese visa categories

By Annie Wei

The Ordinary Visa in China consists of eight sub-categories, which are marked with Chinese phonetic letters F, L, X, C, J-1, J-2, G, and D.

F Visa: Issued to an applicant who is invited to China for a visit, research, lecture, business, scientific-technological and culture exchanges or short-term advanced studies or intern practice for a period of no more than six months.

L Visa: Issued to an applicant who comes to China for tourist purposes, family visit or other personal affairs.

Z Visa: Issued to an applicant who is to take up a post or employment in China and his/her accompanying family members.

X Visa: Issued to an applicant who comes to China for the pur-

pose of study, advanced studies or intern practice for a period of six months or more.

C Visa: Issued to crewmembers on international aviation, navigation and land transportation missions and their family members.

J-1 Visa: Issued to foreign correspondents in China.

J-2 Visa: Issued to foreign correspondents for temporary interviews in China.

G Visa: Issued to those passing through China.

D Visa: Issued to an applicant who is to reside permanently in China.

Extension requirements are different for different visas. The Exit-Entry Administration suggests foreigners contact them directly for further information on 8402 0101.



Expatriates apply for Visas at the PSB

Photo by Dragon

Win some, lose some.



Heed the signs

By David Drakeford

The same lust for wealth and prosperity combined with a complete disregard for risk that brought you to China probably means you have, at some point, played the lottery. In fact you may be doggedly sticking to your magic numbers and home country's draw via the Internet. The irrational fun of placing money on random numbers has somehow slipped under the net of anti-gambling laws in China and mai caipiao is a popular distraction here as well.

The little machines can be found everywhere, from the newspaper stands where you buy your mobile phone recharge cards, to grocery shops, to a dedicated and

spacious outlet located near the Worker's Stadium.

Some shops deal only with the Sports Lottery but if you truly believe in the significance of numbers and their ability to shape your fortune then it's the Welfare Lottery for you. The simplest is '3D' - shout three numbers to your lottery machine's operator and he will issue you a ticket with a very low probability of winning anything.

Better and more familiar to western players is *shuangse qiu*, choose six numbers from 1 to 33 for the red balls and one number from 1 to 16 for the blue ball. Using a blank form and pen or by directly calling out to your friendly operator you will soon

have a bar-coded path to riches in your sweaty palm. You can wait for the results on BTV6 or the ubiquitous *Beijing Wanbao* newspaper, but easier just to scan your ticket into a machine a couple of days after you bought it or check the results for yourself on the zhongjiang chaxun bar at www.bwlc.net.

Tickets are only two yuan per *zhu* and the prize money goes as high as five million. Foreign players seem few and far between at the moment but there's nothing, save your rational understanding of probability, to stop you from playing. If you want a tip for some lucky numbers then I would advise that 2000 and 8 keep coming back to me recently.

ASK Beijing Today

Joshua Dominick asked: Where do Chinese people "hang out" in Beijing?

Beijing Today: Everywhere. Where do you live? In an expat villa in Shunyi!?

Just as foreigners in Beijing hang out in bars, clubs, and restaurants, so do Chinese people. The only difference is that most Chinese people go to places that aren't particularly popular with foreigners. For example, hundreds of Chinese head to Party at the weekends, (the leading KTV chain), where they socialize with friends, colleagues and sometimes even their family. If you want to meet more Chinese people, a 'Killer game' bar could be the place for you. Many young Chinese white collar workers go to these bars to play Killer and meet new people. You could also register on websites like <http://www.ifindu.com.cn> for activities like hiking and team sports ect. The key is that you have a good knowledge of Chinese and can speak and understand it well.

Beijing Today asked an American man who speaks fluent Chinese and hangs out with many Chinese journalists what he thought. He said, "A lot of my Chinese friends do hang out in coffee shops. I only meet Chinese friends through work and through other friends. I met some Chinese people in bars but I never get close to them."

Shane Warren asked: Where can I find local sports teams to join? Will Chinese teams take me?

Beijing Today: Many local sports teams, in particular basketball and football teams, gather at university playing fields and courts on the weekend. The teams are made up of students and non-students. Just go and ask them if you can join in. Be friendly and easy-going, Chinese teams love to take on foreign players.

Mark Lee asked: There are some typical 'Western' dishes like Kung Pao Chicken. What are typical Chinese dishes?

Beijing Today: Kung Pao Chicken is a typical Chinese dish. Beijing Today forwarded your question to a Chinese local food and wine connoisseur. He said: "Typical Chinese dishes vary depending on what city or region in China you are living in," he said.

In Beijing, any Jiachangcai (home style food) restaurant offers menus with typical Beijing dishes, like Disanxian (a vegetable dish of eggplant, potato, and green pepper stir-fried), Tofu and Yuxiangrousi (a bit spicy meat with a fishy smell).

If you go to a southern restaurant, typical dishes might include Chinese soup with medicinal properties, slow cooked meat, fried rice-noodles, Shaguo Rice (rice with meat and vegetables cooked in a 'sand pan').

"Go to a restaurant, ask them for advice (be aware that they may try to get you to order the most expensive dishes) and avoid plumping for Kung Pao Chicken."

Edited by Annie Wei



Behind the scenes with 'Tony' and 'Maria'



By Gareth George

The real challenge for me is bringing a real life reaction to the death scenes, the sad parts. I'm happily married and if I ever lost him, God forbid, that thought really helps bring me to a truthful moment. A created situation, but with real feelings ... Although sometimes it's just as easy as thinking about when your dog died." – Carolann M. Sanita

By Gareth George

When Josh Young's Tony first catches sight of Maria, he's thinking about another woman. "When they meet, it's love at first sight. I draw on my own emotional experience - specifically my own first kiss," he says. "I was at summer camp as a kid, and you know, Tony is a young guy - 18. To get into his mind, I'm back there, after my kiss, running and jumping back to my cabin."

The role of Tony is a dream for Josh. While he's studied music and acting since he was 12 or 13, and even found time to release an eponymously titled debut album of Broadway songs, he's only been with *West Side* for six months.

His Maria, Carolann M. Sanita, is a gifted young soprano with a wealth of experience in showpiece Broadway roles: the mistress in *Evita*, Marian in the *Music Man*, Luisa in the *Fantastiks* and now Maria. "Actually I first played the role two years ago." She says. "It was always a role I wanted to do. Of course I knew the music growing up, and it was great to really learn the subtleties of the part."

The pair have been trying to squeeze in a little of Beijing. They're anticipating a heavy schedule. "I've been to the hutongs, a bit of shopping," Carolann says. "We've both seen the Great Wall and a jade factory...the Friendship Store." They'll actually be working even harder than usual in Beijing. Carolann counts off the days on her fingers, "Usually we work Tuesday through Sunday, with two shows a day on Saturday and Sunday and one a day the rest of the time. Here we open on Sunday, and do two shows Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday."

"When we're not working we REST," laughs Josh. Carolann nods sagely. "When we're performing, there's no drinking, no partying. It takes a lot to keep yourself healthy and to vocally and emotionally sustain what you're doing."

Josh actually follows a special diet. "I have to eat about an hour before I go on stage, then rest. What you eat can

affect your vocal chords. The acid in spicy food can actually burn them, so that's out for me." Hot-pot is off the menu then. "I'm interested in trying some local herbal medicines or relaxation techniques," adds Carolann.

It never looks easy to leap up there on stage night after night, singing and dancing your heart out, and Josh can tell you, it takes a lot of work to get there and stay there. "The story is relevant anywhere in the world, and I hope some Chinese people see it and want to get involved in this kind of musical. For this kind of show you need training. Some singers are born gifted, but here you need to sing and dance night after night." Carolann agrees, "The acting certainly needs training. It's a special kind of expression. The music isn't easy to sing and you need technique to maintain it throughout the show, as there's a lot of screaming and emotional intensity." For this show, they're dancing the original choreography too. "And that's hard," says Josh, "You couldn't just come off the street and do it." Carolann saw the Beijing opera, and wonders whether the opera performers might understand their regime. "There are probably similarities, but of course, the show you see is different. The atmosphere there was very interesting and neat. It wasn't singing as I know it, more like talking in different pitches, but they were obviously very talented."

"Anyway, we don't want people to think so much about how we do it," says Josh, "We want them to enjoy the universal love story and the beautiful music and dancing. If we do that, we've done our job"

Carolann nods, "It's the classic *Romeo and Juliet*. In fact the real challenge for me is bringing a real life reaction to the death scenes, the sad parts. I'm happily married and if I ever lost him, God forbid, that thought really helps bring me to a truthful moment. A created situation, but with real feelings..." she blushes slightly, "Although sometimes it's just as easy as thinking about when your dog died."





st to east

Does the 'modern Romeo and Juliet' move Beijing?



Professional yes, but just how relevant?

The first Broadway musical I watched was *The Phantom of the Opera*, in a theater beside Time Square in New York six years ago. At that time, I knew what the Broadway classics meant to me – the excitement and happiness conquered the jet-lag dizziness. Today *West Side Story*, another classic musical, a modern *Romeo and Juliet*, comes to Beijing. The story of a love tragedy is touching, and our tender humanity drives us to feel sorrow for Tony and Maria. But, to be honest, for audiences in Beijing, two rival gangs – the Puerto Rican Sharks and the American Jets are far-fetched and less enjoyable than fights between the *Zaofan Pai* (the rebel party) and *Xiaoyao Pai* (the free-will party). Therefore it seems we're watching the quarrels and conflicts of unacquainted neighbors. No matter how furious, bitter and bloody it is, it

has no relationship with us. When we put the story aside, it's more like a feast of music and dancing, under delicate settings and lights. The Beijing Tour has an all American crew, so it's the genuine Broadway show. Why do we need the authenticity? Because it symbolizes a professional level. When the actors sing, I hear they're professional singers; when they dance, I see they're professional dancers; and when they read the lines, I feel they're the best actors. When I watched *The Phantom of the Opera*, I couldn't understand the lines, but the language didn't hold back my emotions. Same here. However, this story seems a world away from me, and I found the setting somewhat difficult to relate to.

Liu Ying, housewife

This version of *West Side Story* keeps the story structure of 1957, the creation of Arthur Laurents (the original writer) and musical ideas of Leonard Bernstein (the original composer). However, the similar production style doesn't mean there is no creativity, which propels the visual appreciation to audiences. When the music is on, the boys of the Jets snap their fingers, and my enthusiasm burns up. I can feel there is a flame inside my heart when I see the furious but beautiful dancing and hear Maria sing *Tonight*. The pace in Act 2 is faster. When Maria knows the horrible results of the fight and meets Tony, the song *Place for Us* fills with tender humanity and love. Compared to the movie version where forgiveness is the theme, this translation of dreaming for a peaceful place strengthens the conflicts of the love and hate between them.

Most of the actors are young and passionate but seem to lack experience. For a crew of young rebels, I think the passion is overwhelmed to the skillful technique. The supporting roles always drag my eyes from the leading roles. Because Bernardo doesn't sing *America* in the musical, I feel he loses a big part in the act. But with fewer performances, I see his excellent dancing skill and strong air as a leader. It's a pity that the Maria is not from the A team. At first, she acts like a princess who always makes trouble, but she gradually moves onto the right track. Her common voice is supplied by her hard-working performance. The scenery and setting continues the simple style of 50s version, but much more modern. The black and white projection illustrates New York City, and the purple lights symbolize the romance out of the violence."

Rauol, a musical fan

We all know that *West Side Story* is a Broadway classic – the modern *Romeo and Juliet* in New York. In my opinion, it's the history of racial tensions in the US that has won this its acclaim as a classic, rather than the love story itself. I appreciate all the players, their singing and dancing, and I even cried when Tony died. But something isn't right. No more praise for the beautiful choreography and the dramatic music in the play, for every critic has made that point. So what's the problem? I think it's the story.

These are gangs who like brutal fights and dare not take responsibility. They're poor and upset freaks raised by junkies and drunks. It's a glance at a society, but what about those with no knowledge of such a background? In *Romeo and Juliet*, the simply romantic tragedy could happen to anyone because we – poor or rich, white or black – are involved with the same emotions. It's strange seeing this passionate but never absorbing.

Shelley Xie, journalist





THE BARBER IS BASED ON FAN YIPING'S NOVEL. BUT WHAT MAKES IT SO EXCITING IS THE LATE PAINTER CHEN YIFEI, WHO FINISHED FOUR FIFTHS OF THE DIRECTING. THE STORY IS ABOUT LU PING, A SHANGHAI HAIRDRESSER, DURING WORLD WAR II. THE WARS AND TURMOIL SEPARATES THE LOVEBIRDS AND CHANGES LU'S DESTINY. DESPITE RESPECT FOR THE LATE PAINTER, CRITICS ARE DIVIDED.



The Music Box:

Chen Yifei's final touch

I was moved by its solemnity

Meng Yuanquan, a graduate student who majored in movie studies.

"Chen Yifei wanted to create a Chinese version of *The Pianist*. He expresses the feelings of powerlessness in our daily lives through a minor character like Lu Ping. The most touching sentence from him is from the 'I'm only a barber' scene. It seems like a man weighed down by the pressures of life, but his real self-esteem makes us feel the unbending spirit in his inner heart. I believe that a film can't reach perfection without women. Chen drew pictures of women throughout his life. There are three female characters that influenced Lu – his lover Song Jiayi, his wife Yu Mian, and the widow. Jiayi can't fight against her fate, marrying a general, even though she falls in love with Lu. But whenever Lu is in danger, she makes him survive. Yu Mian is a singer who struggles to survive by obeying different men. The widow is a highlight of the film, actively showing her love and hate. When she sees the Japanese soldier who killed her beloved she goes with him without hesitation. These ladies are different illustrations of Chinese women from Chen's point of view. Chen Yifei has created many artworks, his best-known work being his oil paintings. His movie gives the impression that you have just visited an art gallery and each scene is a painting. The lanes, stone roads and trees on the wild plains express the strong flavor of oil paintings and also convey the efforts of the director. The music of the film is produced by Xi Qiming, a famous musician that lived in Shanghai for years. They remind us of the scenes in that old city, especially through the ancient music box. I'm a sentimental movie nut, and at the end I felt my tears drop straight into my heart."



Chen Kun as Li Ping

Bad graffiti on Chen's oils

Kavkalu, Shanghai-based independent movie critic

"Zhang Yimou said a good story is the basis of everything and he could not be more correct. Human emotions move people, not visual effects. Every clip from *The Music Box* can be considered to be good, but what we finally see is a mess of illogical scenes, like reeds jumbled together. Chen's taste in poetic art frames is placed on a story that cannot support itself. The film wanders at will, which is the biggest problem, and Lu Ping's life alternations are something that the screenwriter imposes on him. Both Lu's entry and later escape from the Nationalist Army seems to have been done at ease. The most irritating is that the eight-playwright team shows us their ignorance of the period. Would a soldier cry and refuse to cut Lu's hair? All of us know that in the 1940s the bald headed look was in fashion. The killing of the Japanese officer in their concession and their open rape scenes only reflect their lack of knowledge about concession history and their exaggeration of the facts. In Chen Yifei's 1995 film *Evening Liasion*, he captured each historical part with great accuracy. *The Music Box* is not completely a Chen film because he did not do the editing. We can appreciate this movie visually, but a motion picture mainly depends on a good story. After all, it is human emotions that touch us most."



Zeng Li as Chen Jiayi

Chen Yifei needs no flattering acclaim

Yang Lan, a famous Chinese TV presenter and producer, wrote her comments on her sina blog after she attended the premiere on April 9.

"When I saw a digital sign at the cinema in Shanghai saying that Chen was waiting for the world's applause in heaven, I felt it must have been sincere, but I didn't like it. I believe if Chen were still alive he would not want others to judge his film based on their sympathy for him. I feel it's a touching movie. It reflects the rich history and the playful form of destiny, based on Mr Chen's unique aesthetic value. The development of the roles is attractive and old Shanghai is presented in a lively and vivid way. But some performances are not so powerful, so they weakened the story. Chen Kun has improved a lot in this movie, which must be considered his best one. In the end, the leading actor and actress meet up after all their difficulties. Although they're not young, they finally belong to each other. I could not stop crying, either for the characters or for Chen."

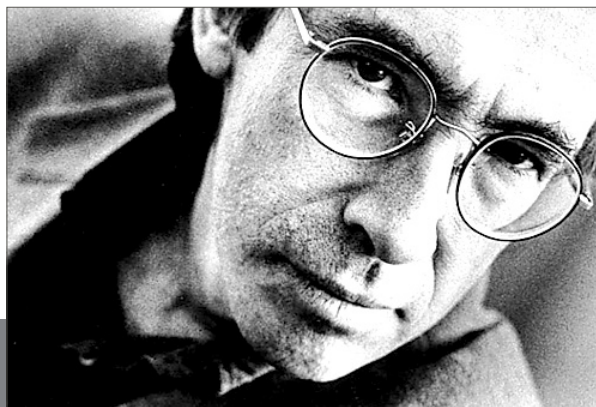
In a fans' eyes: rich feelings for Lu Ping

ztyueliang, a networm

Because Lu is an ordinary person like everyone around us, the character's life makes us feel like a cup of tea. But Chen Kun expresses Lu's hard days with rich expressions on his face and in his eyes. For most of the time, Chen Kun softly delivers his emotions. For example, when the singing woman gives up fleeing with him, he doesn't call her back furiously; when he cycles with his lover, they enjoy mild happiness; and when he sees her wedding, he smiles lightly. But he also reveals his strong passions in his own way. One important tool is his scissors. He serves with confidence the Shanghai ladies, with comfort for villagers in the small town, with sorrow and enthusiasm for anti-Japanese soldiers and with coziness for acquainted army friends. The silence of Lu Ping gives Chen a good opportunity to highlight the use of body language. Because he doesn't have so many lines, we can even turn sounds off to understand and appreciate Lu's experiences through Chen Kun's eyes. Chen Kun brings Lu to life in a depressing way through the whole movie and submerges himself into the role.

The condensed criticism

Ian McEwan's *Saturday* laid bare



Ian McEwan

Ian McEwan
Broad themes:
Fiction's use in the modern world
Minutiae of everyday life
Menacing urban setting
Personal, intimate
Iraq invasion, 9/11

Saturday is a sharp focus day in the life of English neurosurgeon Henry Perowne. As you might imagine, it takes place on a Saturday; a day off from work and also an unusual Saturday, at least in its London setting: February 15 2003, when hundreds of thousands marched in protest against the proposed invasion of Iraq. Away from the backdrop of the teeming masses, Perowne goes about his mundane Saturday errands, while anticipating a family reunion in the evening. While the focus is sharp, it's not dreamy. Here is a scientist; a rational man favoring analysis over imagination. The intimacy of the novel stresses the tensions, the menace and the sense of impending disaster, especially set against the disgruntled, fearful crowds.

So is it any good?

"His gift of observation [is] wonderfully precise. Next to nothing feels forced; explores this debate between rationality and imagination. For all the author's occasionally irritating in-jokes, it is not clear which side comes out on top." – Tim Adams, *The Observer*

Irritating?

"(A) magnificently imagined and surprisingly flawed work." – David Wiegand, *San Francisco Chronicle*

Flawed how?

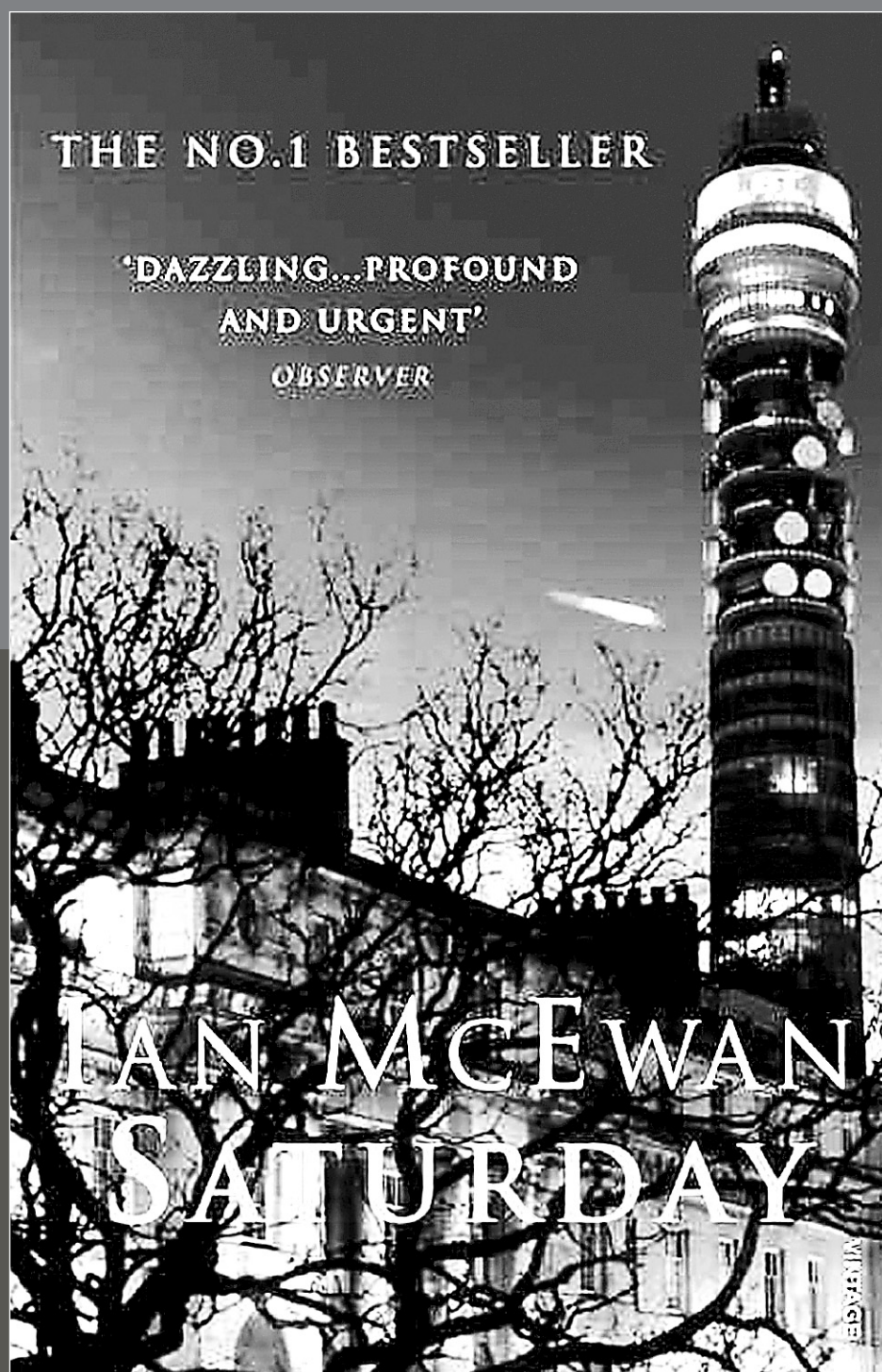
There is much to admire in the efficiency and clarity. Here his control is too pronounced." – Zoe Heller, *The New York Times Book Review*

Why is that a problem?

"(A) novel you can't help admiring and can't possibly love." – David Gates, *Newsweek*

What's not to love?

"In *Atonement*, young characters life-changing experiences resonated through wider events. In *Saturday* a middle-aged hero resistant to change is set against the fate of millions. Perowne cannot win. The writing is as sharp and vivid as ever; it is the raw material that is flawed." – Andrew Crumey, *Scotland on Sunday*



I see. Sharp and vivid sounds good though...

"Offsetting local and global menace, McEwan invites us to make other parallels – not least between the dissections of the neurologist and the revelations of the novelist, so absorbed in probing his character's emotional threads." – Tom Adair, *The Scotsman*
But is this handled realistically?

"McEwan is writing close to the news and to the facts: fiction has to take its place within a context of reality. Both are given equal weight, but there can be no doubt that this hyper-real novel is absolutely convincing on its own terms. Undoubtedly McEwan's best." – Anita Brookner, *The Spectator*
His best? Really?

"Written with superb exactness, complex, suspenseful, reflective and humane, this novel about an expert on the human brain by an expert on the human mind reinforces his status as the supreme novelist of his generation." – Peter Kemp, *Sunday Times*

Any reasons why I might not like it?

"Too artful, just a smidgen over-contrived. Perhaps an inevitable consequence of observing the dramatic unities of place, time and action: The intersection of the public and private takes on a disturbing neatness." – Michael Dirda, *The Washington Post*

But is it interesting?

"McEwan gives lie to the view that novels can no longer encapsulate the present, and shows that being topical does not mean being merely gossipy. *Saturday* is much less boring than it sounds. There is a constant undercurrent of menace to keep readers on their toes." – Theo Tait, *Times Literary Supplement*

That sounds exciting.

"*Saturday* can only be described as dull." – Deidre Donahue, *USA Today*

Oh.

Are we in the west so shaken in our sense of ourselves and our culture, are we so disablingly terrified in the face of the various fanaticisms which threaten us, that we can allow ourselves to be persuaded and comforted by such a self-satisfied and, in many ways, ridiculous novel as this?" – John Banville, *The New York Review of Books*

Hmmm. I'm not sure.

Anyone else?

"*Saturday* reads like a post-9/11 Mrs. Dalloway. Not only one of the most powerful pieces of post-9/11 fiction yet, but also fulfilled that primal mission of the novel: to show how we live today." – Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

(Gareth George)

Feel the Earth with bare feet

"Going barefoot is the gentlest way of walking and can symbolize a way of living - being authentic, vulnerable, sensitive to our surroundings. It's the feeling of enjoying warm sand beneath our toes, or carefully making our way over sharp rocks in the darkness. It's a way of living that has the lightest impact, removing the barrier between us and nature."

- Adele Coombs, the Australian author of 'Barefoot Dreaming'



What is it like living barefoot?

Julia Hill is a barefooter extraordinaire. She spent two years living in a California redwood in a crusade to protect the state's last remaining old-growth redwood forest from destruction by Pacific Lumber, a powerful logging company known for extensive violations of environmental regulations. She always climbed the tree, which she named Luna, barefoot, even in the dead of winter, saying that she "had to have the connection." Her hike from Luna to a triumphant press conference at the end of her protest was also done without shoes.

"In the Spring of 2005 I developed bursitis in my left hip. The pain was so bad that by May I was holding myself up whenever I had to stand for any length of time," said Brian Daniels from Indiana. He had been going about every 2-3 months to a foot reflexologist. At the end of June, the doctor recommended going barefoot saying that it is like having continuous reflexology. "I tried it and in a day my hip felt better," said Brian, "by the end of the weekend I had no pain at all. I only wear shoes now when it is necessary and I have been barefoot every day through this winter. No hip pain, yet!"

Robert Jeungst of San Diego, California, said that he had a major back injury that never stopped giving him problems. He didn't want surgery and was simply living with the pain. "After getting rid of the shoes for good, I realized that my back, which used to be my weak point, had obviously gotten much stronger and almost pain free," he said. Jill Margo from New Jersey said that she started barefooting at the age of 40 after suffering from foot pain associated with his fallen metatarsals and bad knee problem. "This is what drove me to try something radical ... barefooting," Jill said. After living barefoot for eight years, the pain from her metatarsals has ceased.

John M. Harder, an active SBL member first tried barefooting when he was looking for ways to make his life simpler and get closer to nature. "A few years ago, I took a short walk in my bare feet. It wasn't much, just a stroll around a local nature preserve," he said, "As a child, being barefoot was not a conscious effort. All of that had been forgotten though. The years had taken it away."

If you are interested in barefoot hiking, here is a beginner's guide.

First of all, if possible, spend some time in your front or back yard barefoot. Try a variety of surfaces. Take your time, look around and flex your toes gratefully.

Never allow your bare feet to kick, shuffle, or drag along the ground. It is lateral movement that increases the risk of getting cut on sharp or rough surfaces.

Stop if you want to take a good look at something off the path. When your bare feet are in motion, focus on the part of the path two to three paces in front of you.

You should try, within comfortable limits, to keep more weight on the forward part of your foot, and to keep it there for longer during the course of each step than might previously been your habit.

You must never forget you are going barefoot and develop habits of awareness. The tread of a barefoot hiker should always be soft and light, sometimes it must be wary and tentative.

By Qiu Jiaoning

Kelly Larsen, a young lady from Wisconsin is famous for her barefoot lifestyle. Kelly does a lot of walking and biking - all barefoot. She is barefooted when she goes to work or to the church, banks, libraries, restaurants, and grocery shops. Kelly is particularly proud of her well-adapted soles that can handle cold and snow as well as sharp objects without damage.

"I never wear shoes now. People tell me I'm weird. I agree with them," Kelly said. She had been very picky about her shoes as she would easily sweat or get blisters. She says that her feet became healthier when she stopped wearing shoes.

Kelly, who has done a great job spreading the word about 'barefooting', is not alone. She first decided to go barefoot in 2000 after finding a website for the Society for Barefoot Living (www.barefooters.org). The organization was set up for people who love going barefoot pretty much everywhere, all the time (not just around the house or at the beach), as a lifestyle choice, including out and about on streets, in shops and stores,

in the country, and hiking.

Paul Lucas, a software engineer from California, started the Society for Barefoot Living in 1994. He posted a message on an online bulletin board to see if other barefooters would respond. As well as trying to promote barefoot acceptance worldwide, the organization also sets up get-togethers for members to meet and go on barefoot outings together.

The organization now has more than 1,079 members from across the globe including all the US and 51 other countries. The members enjoy walking barefoot "as nature intended", taking a delight in feeling the many textures the world has to offer, they like having tough, callused soles and even think it's cool to get them dirty.

Barefooters can also reach out to each other via the Internet and websites like <http://www.unshod.org/pfbc/> (Parents for Barefoot Children) and <http://www.runningbarefoot.org/> (Running Barefoot).





Although the Americans were the first to introduce jeans to the fashion world, the Italians transformed them into a chic icon. One of the creators in Italy is GAS. Now GAS IS HERE in China.

A double rainbow to keep it simple



By Shelley Xie

Jeans are an essential clothes item for every young one.

Although the Americans were the first to introduce jeans to the fashion world the Italians transformed them into a chic icon. One of the creators in Italy is GAS (Grotto Abigliamento Sportivo: Grotto Sports Apparel). Grotto is the

name of the brand's founder and president - Claudio Grotto, who began to create unique clothing items at his textile factory in 1972 before founding GAS in 1982.

You can see its logo, the double rainbow, on every piece of GAS clothing. The natural phenomenon of the double rainbow, which Claudio observed in Capetown, South Africa, inspired him to create this distinctive and simple mark.

"When people see the double rainbow, they will be cheered up and happy after getting through all their difficulties and storms," said Claudio. "We artfully tailor the logo on the pockets, hoping to bring luck to our customers and to communicate the values of dynamism, positivism and optimism."

"In my opinion, there are no young or old people," explained Claudio. "Many people ask me how old I am. Now I'm in my fifties, but I maintain my enthusiasm and passion and I feel like I am thirty. So you will never get old if you have a passionate heart. My clothes reflect this philosophy and therefore they lure young customers."

Moving away from jeans, GAS developed different product lines as it grew, including its most famous sub-brand, the motorcycle-wear of GAS Honda. The charm of the Moto Grand Prix Super Race matches F1 in the minds of youths all over the world - the speed, the passion, the excitement and the thrills. The handsome, masculine racers wear fashionable and practical uniforms. "Now we mix the motorcycle, the music and the fashion."

GAS is making its name all over the world. Last year, it opened a store in Shanghai after opening its flagship store in Hong Kong a few years ago. "We have a team

of designers from 55 nationalities," said Claudio. "They're not only clothes designers, but also architects, interior designers and music producers. Their different cultural backgrounds enable them to understand what young people want throughout the diverse global markets." Claudio believes his youthful consumers search for values and value through the way they dress so they can express their own personality.

Turning the pages of *The MaGASine*, the GAS collection album, we immediately fall in love with it. It's a magazine at the front, and a notebook at the back. It is made from recycled paper. "We have a 'no waste' policy, so all of our products have versatile functions. In our magazine, there are illustrations showing you how to fight against the pollution of natural resources, and tips on how to make your own non-toxic cleaning products."

It also introduces new designers from all over the world, including participants of the GAS Campaign (who explore new ideas and develop new talents). The most touching aspect must be the bold but lovely voices from young guys who put fresh flesh on the brand.

When I stepped into its store in Shanghai, the big blue cushions featuring slogans like 'Keep it Simple' and 'This is to Relax'



were like a magic spell.

Store Info:

Shanghai branch: No. 837 Huai Hai Zhong Road. Call 021-6473

9745.

Hong Kong flagship store: LCX, Ocean Terminal, Level 3 Tsimshatsui, Kowloon. Call 3102-3668.

Footwear

From sports shoes to canvas shoes to high-heels, girls have more to choose from than the boys.

Honda accessories

Besides the apparel collections for men and women, GAS Honda also produces accessories like bags, caps, gloves and key-chains.

Games

There are many online games for motorbike racers to play and compete. The prizes are alluring, including a GAS Honda collection and even a Honda CBR 600 motorbike with Team Honda Repsol 2005 graphics.



"We have a team of designers from 55 nationalities," said Claudio. "They're not only clothes designers, but also architects, interior designers and music producers. Their different cultural backgrounds enable them to understand what young people want throughout the diverse global markets." - Claudio Grotto, GAS creator

Essenza Revitalizing Eye Pads

Based on traditional Chinese medical therapy, these pads contain extracts of Panax, angelica, and ginkgo. It not only nourishes the skin but also soothes the nerves and improves the quality of sleep. Price: 30 pieces for 156 yuan Available: in all Watson's Supermarkets



Lose the panda eyes

**Revlon Absolutes C Whitening Eye Mask**

The fragrance may be a little strong but it effectively soothes wrinkles. While whitening, it also promotes the flexibility of the eye skin. The vitamin C it contains gives your skin a healthy sheen. Price: five pairs for 168 yuan Available: in all Revlon sections in main department stores.

Avon Solution Botanisource Eye Comfort

This green gel is like an icy coke in the summer for your tired eye skin! Save your skin from puffiness in an emergency. The essence of bergamot, rose and other organic herbal nutrients effectively promote the level of moisture. This product is refreshing but not greasy. Price: 350 ml for 70 yuan Available: in all Avon sections in main department stores.



Still being driven crazy by the puffiness, dark shadows or crow's feet after a spring of partying? Want to know where to find eye masks that cool your eyes without burning your purse? Here we recommend nine weapons for the battle against eye skin problems. Get them and fight!

**OGUMA Ice Eye Energy**

Best hydrating eye care and ideal for soothing crow's feet. The combination of milk protein, trifolium pratense and flower extracts enriches the vulnerable skin around the eyes and restores flexibility.

Price: ten pairs for 100 yuan Available: World Trade Center, Henderson Center

**Mary Kay Indulge Soothing Eye Gel**

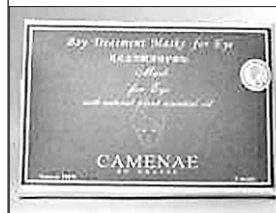
Revive a tired-looking appearance with this cool, soothing gel. Contains botanical extracts reported to help reduce the appearance of puffiness and improve the skin's elasticity and firmness in the eye area. Can be used as a mask or a 'leave on' product. Price: 15 g for 180 yuan Available: in all Mary Kay sections in main department stores.

**Saffron Eye Mask**

Providing certified organic aromatherapy skincare. Saffron can improve blood circulation and relieve pressure. Suitable for eye shadow and damaged skin, it effectively soothes pouches and wrinkles. Price: one pair for 8 yuan Available: in all Watson's Supermarkets

**Marjorie Bertagne GG hEGF Uplifting Eye Pads**

The big pad can cover the whole eye area, is suitable for all faces and contains GG hEGF (Epidermal Growth Factor) to promote new skin growth. Within three days, the eye skin feels firm and uplifted. Eventually, your eye skin will be baby soft. Price: five pieces for 150 yuan Available: Main super market: Ito Yokado, Sogo

**Camenae Laurel Eye Patches**

These big patches take care of the whole eye area. They contain a combination of many herbal extracts, including laurel leaves, tea leaves, papaya, and duckweed. Very moisturizing, they help to avoid puffiness even after being up all night. You can also see the fading of dark shadows each day.

Price: three pairs for 98 yuan Available: 1 floor Pacific Department store Yingke Centre, Chaoyang

**Pretty Rally Lavender Moisturizing Eye Pads**

These gentle, lavender-fragranced pads reduce fatigue and dry skin by deep miniaturization. The purple ribbon and recycled paper box are attractive. The price is also very competitive. Price: eight pairs for 38 yuan Available: in the Pretty Rally section in main department stores.

When real women meet mini sandwiches

By Chu Meng

Fantasy, on the second floor of the Pacific Department Store, is one of my favorite restaurants. The mini ham sandwich is exceptional. It is a normal ham sandwich, except it is a quarter the size of ordinary sliced bread. Women should never order that unless they are on a first date because the main attraction is the cute toothpicks in each mini sandwich. The tips are rolled with wrapping paper, giving you a chance to show your elegance. Imagine a lovely night on a lovely date, with a little lady sitting opposite to a very cute guy. In the lovely moonlight, under tender table lights, the little lady gets everything right. When she gets her hair and nails done, when she is in Gucci's new fashion black evening top, Hermas's mix-match fur skirt, Paul Smith's tall lamb-skin boots, and Prada's yellow handbag; when she is wearing Swarovski's crystal ear rings and necklace sparkling; when she has Lancome's hypnotic extreme eyelash pomade, the long curly eyelash shadowing just on the face, she picks up cute sandwiches with her cute fingers. Unfortunately, the French fries ruin everything. The quantity is larger than the sandwiches, and they come bigger than fingers.



When mango meets grapefruit

By Chu Meng

Fruit Mix is a neat and clean fruit snack bar from Taiwan Province. Its mango and tuna sandwich provides a tropical twist to the sandwich. The sandwich is as clean as the decorations: oil-drained tuna, sliced mango,

mayo, and minced onion with mustard, served with toasted bread. However, if you enjoy it together with grapefruit tea with honey, one of Fruit Mix's masterpieces, you will realize that the subtle bitter grapefruit taste perfectly matches the mango.

But the stingy size of the sandwich and salad means it is a little bit overpriced. Perhaps when the simple and elegant environment and free Internet access is taken into consideration it could be called a good place for white collar customers.

By Chu Meng

A quiz first: what do you think you can put between two pieces of bread? The answer is the whole world! Yes, What is the best sandwich? Is it something simple, or do you prefer something more involved? Is it for women or men, the young or the old, vegetarians or meat-lovers, the slim or the overweight? There's a sandwich for every type of a person, for everyone's taste. Here we go!



Want a piece of me?

Recommended sandwich websites
Sandwich project

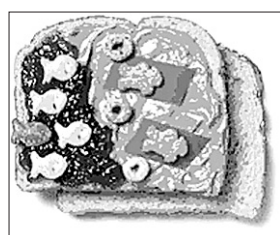
<http://www.iliveonyourvisits.com/sp/index.php>

The British sandwich association

<http://www.sandwichesonline.org.uk/>

Recipes today/sandwich

<http://recipestoday.com/recipes/archive/sandwiches.htm>



The Mini-Seaside Sandwich

Ingredients

- 2 slices bread (white, wheat, rye, or raisin)
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon grape jelly
- 3 or 4 bite-size fish-shaped crackers
- Rolled fruit leather
- Graham snack teddy-bear-shaped cookies
- Sweetened fruit-flavored round cereal

Directions:

1. Spread the peanut butter on one slice of bread to create the 'beach'.
2. Spread the other half with grape jelly to create the 'ocean'.
3. Arrange the fish crackers in the ocean.
4. If desired, cut small rectangles of fruit leather for beach towels to place on the beach, and place Graham snack cookies on each towel.
5. Place a cereal ring next to each cookie so the teddy bears can take a dip in the ocean if they get too hot. Top with remaining bread slice.



When compulsive eaters meet party-food subs

By Chu Meng

What would your family and guests welcome? World famous, fresh Subway subs, featuring your choice of cold meats and seafood on gourmet-inspired breads, cut into handy four-inch portions and arranged on serving platters, ready to be enjoyed! Wow, ladies, stay away from those huge delicious devils. Sweet onion chicken teriyaki is one of the gourmet-inspired specialties. Lean and tender, savory

teriyaki glazed chicken strips are topped with Subway's own fat-free sweet onion sauce served hot with your choice of fresh vegetables and condiments on freshly baked bread. The tuna sandwich is highly recommended. The bread can be cold or toasted, but sourdough definitely tastes the best with tuna. The tuna shouldn't be runny or chunky, but more or less flaky, and then mixed with mayo, diced celery and the

ultimate necessity, dill pickles! Mmm! The cheddar cheese, lettuce, tomato and mustard are not required, as the sandwich already tastes superb without them, but they do add to the overall sandwich taste and experience. They are ideal for birthdays and anniversaries, school, sports and club events, office functions, dances, picnics and parties - wherever and whenever there's a happy, hungry crowd to feed.



Buildings in the town are all of primitive style

The old town of Huangyao in Guangxi became the location for American movie *The Painted Veil*, which raises the veil of the 900-year old history and culture of the town

By Xiao Pang

Translated by Zhang Nan

The old town of Huangyao is located in Zhaoping County, Guangxi Province. It is a town of more than 900 years of history and culture.

Huangyao is like a poem anthology thousands of years old, which is forgotten and left silent on the book shelf of the library. However, it conquers your heart with its primitive simplicity and concinnity when you open and read it by chance.

Last autumn, I went there to interview the production unit of the movie *The Painted Veil*. The film, featuring Edward Norton and Naomi Watts, tells the story of a young British couple's life in a Chinese village in the 1920s. They experience life transformation they never imagined while they lived comfortably in Britain. Having experienced a series of emotional frustrations and twists, they finally understand and accept each other.

The eaves of the houses at Huangyao slope gently. The main street is wide, with houses standing at each side in order. When the film production staff filmed the scenes where many

residents died from cholera and decorated Huangyao with white cloth, the whole town appeared to be in mourning. Entering the town, every blue-stone on the floor, every old banyan, and every ancient-style door reminded me of its long history, and made me feel that my life experience was insignificant.

Huangyao was constructed according to the Chinese ancient Nine-palace and Eight-trigrams of the Lingnan area. All the houses there are built in the Ming and Qing dynasty style with green bricks and black tiles.

There is a main street outside the town with private guest-houses. The buildings in the town are all of primitive style with ancient doors. The floor is paved with bluestones. The Yaojiang River flows across the village.

To see the real face of the town, you'd better observe it in the twilight or after sunset. At about five or six in the morning, you can see the local residents' real life, which they carry on their shoulder poles: farmers carry greenfeed for pigs and chicken food; peddlers carry persimmon and fermented soya beans to sell.

My landlady was Liang Erjie, who a 'Erjie soybean milk' business. I paid twenty yuan per day for a big room, with two double beds, a wash room, a

water heater, shampoo, bath soap and washing powder. She even cooked me three meals. The 'Ershu rice noodles' are delicious. I would come back every day to have a bowl for my lunch. The steamed rice noodles in the restaurant were of a special flavor, like the taste of meat. The nights in Huangyao were my favorite. All about this town a feeling of long, long ago came to me. Alleyways with invisible exits are everywhere. It may feel scary when you enter them alone, till you find the exits leading to a river, another street or a house.

Opera stage

The opera stage stands at the entrance of the town, which was last renovated in the Qing dynasty. The carved flowers and characters are delicate. The characters on the plaque of the stage says 可以兴 (keyixing), which means that people can use new ways to boost the emotion development in order to perform the art live on the stages.

Xianren ancient well

The well is in fact just a normal pond. However, its structure is marvelous: spring comes out from one pond, where water is drinkable; then the water flow to another pond, where the water can be used for washing vegetables; then the water flow to the third pond, where people can wash clothes; at last the water flow to the river.



A scene from *The Painted Veil*



The Yaojiang River



Courtyard



The eaves of the houses at Huangyao slope gently Photo by IC

Tips

How to get there:

1. From Guangzhou. Take a coach to Hezhou first. The ticket price is 80 yuan. Then, from Hezhou to Zhongshan. The journey takes you about 50 minutes and costs five yuan. Last, take a regular bus from Zhongshan to Gongqiao, and get off at Huangyao. The ticket price is eight yuan. It will take you about two and a half hours.

2. From Guilin. There are coaches traveling between Guilin and Huangyao every half an hour each day from 8am to 5pm.

Eating:

There are some small restaurants and food is cheap. A bowl of dumplings or rice glue balls costs only one yuan. Some restaurants will cook whatever you want if you give them the menu beforehand. Huangyao bean curd is suggested.

Accommodation:

There are lots of cheap private guesthouses. It may cost you about 10 or 20 yuan a day for a room. The price can be higher during holidays.

Rongcheng Hostel: 20 yuan for a room with television and washroom. Hot water is provided in the wash room in the corridor. No bath facilities.

Rongcheng Inn: 100 yuan for a four-people-room, with hot water, and air conditioning. 80 yuan for a four-people-room without hot water and air conditioner.

Market Hostel: 10 yuan for a bed. It is the highest building at Huangyao. Standing on the top floor, you can see the panorama of the whole town.



Huangyao is like a poem anthology thousands of years old

Vanuatu: birthplace of Bungee jumping

Vanuatu is an archipelagic country in the southwest Pacific, with unique landscape, oceanscapes, and cultural heritage. You may have heard the name, or know of the island country, but few know it's where bungee was born.



Sailing the Vanuatu waters is a rewarding experience

By Zhang Nan

Originally called *naghol* or land diving, bungee jumping is an adulthood ceremony for the residents on the island of Pentecost.

Pentecosters believe that jumping brings a bountiful yam harvest, and jumpers' hair is meant to brush the ground to fertilize it. Every year, as the first yam crop begins to show its green tips in early April, Pentecosters begin to build towers in their villages, often to heights of 23 meters. Wooden boards are placed on top and young men find durable and elastic vines long enough for jumping.

The ground under the tower is tilled to soften the earth, and all rocks are removed. As each man psyches himself into the dive, his friends tie vines to his ankles, and when he raises his hands the people below stop their singing, dancing, and whistling. Just before he dives, he reviews his most intimate thoughts, which may include family and marital problems. Because these could be his last words, the women below remain silent, despite any public airing of family secrets.

Each diver claps his hands, crosses his arms over his chest and leans forward until he falls over the edge. As he jerks to a stop, male relatives rush forward to help him untie his feet and stand him up as the crowd roars its approval.

Island Heaven

Vanuatu Islands are a Y-shaped chain of 83 islands occupying an area of 13,000 square kilometers.

Ambrym – One of the few places on earth you can see seething active lava lakes. The island's twin volcanoes,



Enjoy a dinner on the beach



Pentecosters believe that jumping brings a bountiful yam harvest



Ship wrecks under water

Mount Benbow and Mount Marum, still rumble away and smaller vents ooze steam and lava. Standing on the rim of Mount Marum, the core of the lava lake can be seen swirling and spitting in endless fury. It takes you about five hours to reach the awe-inspiring view at the top of Mt. Marum.

Aneityum – a Robinson Crusoe island for adventurous honeymooners

Aneityum is the southernmost inhabited island in the archipelago. The island is surrounded by live coral reef. Beautiful white sandy beaches stud the shore, adding to its natural charm. As there are few cars, it is ideal for keen bushwalkers to follow tracks and paths in a lush tropical environment to waterfalls and hot springs.

The only accommodation on the nearby island of Inyeug is the Mystery Island Guesthouse. Accommodation is a simple coral and thatched guesthouse. Without telephones, power, restaurants or shops, you will be a real Robinson Crusoe. You need to bring food and fresh water, though seafood and fruit are usually available.

Espiritu Santo – home of natural creatures. Santo is the largest island of Vanuatu, with a great expanse of rainforest and home to colorful butterflies, tropical birds and beautiful orchids.

What to do

Diving

The waters surrounding the islands of Vanuatu provide some of the most spectacular and varied diving in the South Pacific. Swim in warm, crystal-clear water, watch schools of multi-colored fish, explore huge sunken plane and ship wrecks or paddle among shallow coral reefs brimming with marine life.

Sailing

Sailing the Vanuatu waters is a rewarding experience. Half day, full day and multiday trips go from Port Vila on Efate and Luganville on Espiritu Santo. Half or full day trips feature sight-seeing, swimming, snorkeling, picnicking, exploring caves, plus more, while the multiday ones are more geared at inner-islands exploring and live-abroad diving.

Fishing

The virtually untouched waters of Vanuatu provide superb fishing for real enthusiasts and amateurs alike. All types of fishing are easily arranged on the charter boats. Also available is reef fishing for the less adventurous.

Events this year

Telecom Vanuatu Round Island Relay

Saturday, July 29. A challenging 10 person relay race around Vanuatu's main island of Efate and part of Vanuatu's Independence Celebrations.

Back to My Roots Custom Festival - 4th Annual North Ambrym Custom Festival (August 16 - 18)

An opportunity to see the traditional customs of north Ambrym. During the Festival, you can watch traditional dance performances, flute demonstrations, sand drawing demonstrations, and children's games.

Laplap Local food

Laplap is the country's national dish, made by pounding taro or yam roots into a paste. The mixture is placed on taro or spinach leaves and soaked in grated coconut mixed with water. Pieces of pork, beef, chicken, fish or flying fox are added; the mixture is tied up in leaves from the laplap plant and cooked in an underground oven.

By Chu Meng

Nail-biting is a common stress-relieving habit. It can also be a learned behavior from family members. Nail-biting is the most common of 'nervous habits', which include thumb-sucking, nose-picking, hair-twisting or -pulling, tooth-grinding, and picking at skin.

You may bite your nails without realizing you are doing it.

Nail-biting includes biting the cuticle and soft tissue surrounding the nail as well as biting the nail itself.

Who bites their nails?

People of all ages.

1 About 50 percent of children between the ages of 10 and 18 bite their nails at one time or another. Nail-biting occurs most often as teens are going through puberty changes.

2 About 23 percent of young adults, ages 18 to 22 years, bite their nails.

3 Only a small number of other adults bite their nails. Most people stop biting their nails on their own by age 30.

About 10 percent of men over the age of 30 bite their nails.

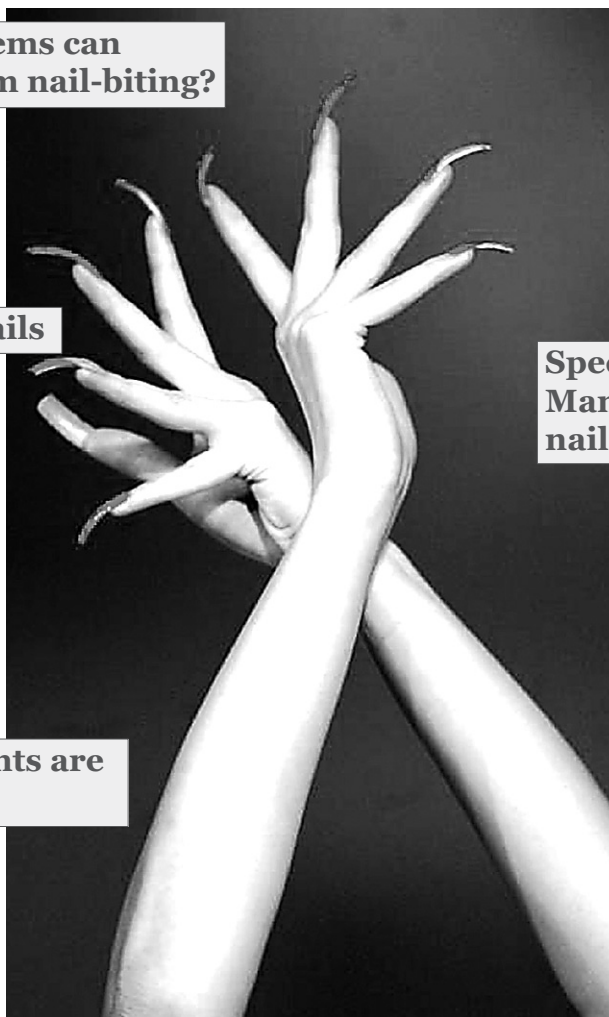
4 Boys bite their nails more often than girls after age 10.

Nail-biting may occur with other body-focused repetitive behaviors (BFRP) such as hair-pulling or skin-picking.

What problems can develop from nail-biting?

Caring for your nails

What treatments are available



Who bites their nails?

Special considerations: Manicures and weak nails

Special considerations: Manicures and weak nails

How to quit nail biting?

What problems can develop?

Nail-biting can cause your fingertips to be red and sore and your cuticles to bleed. Nail-biting also increases your risk of infections around nailbeds and in your mouth. Dental problems and infections of the gums can be caused by nail-biting.

Long-term nail-biting can also interfere with normal nail growth and cause deformed nails. Nail-biting may be a symptom of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

What treatments are available?

Several treatment measures may help you stop biting your nails. Some focus on behavior changes and some focus on physical barriers to nail-biting.

1 Keep your nails trimmed and filed. Taking care of your nails can help reduce your nail-biting habit and encourage you to keep your nails attractive.

2 Have a manicure regularly or use nail polish. Men can use a clear polish. Wearing artificial nails may stop you from biting your nails and protect them as they grow out.

3 Try stress-management techniques if you bite your nails because you are anxious or stressed.

4 Paint a bitter-tasting polish, such as CONTROL-IT or Thum, on your nails. The awful taste will remind you to stop every time you start to bite your nails.

5 Try substituting another activity, such as drawing or writing or squeezing a stress

ball when you find yourself biting your nails. If you keep a record of nail-biting, you will become more aware of the times when you bite your nails and be able to stop the habit.

6 Wear gloves, adhesive bandages, or colored stickers whenever possible to remind you not to bite your nails.

7 Snap a rubber band on the inside of your wrist when you start to bite your nails so you have a negative physical response to nail-biting.

Children may bite their nails more often when they are having problems at school or with friends. Talk with your child or his or her teacher about any new stress at school. Children are more likely to stop biting their nails when they understand what may trigger it. It is also important for your child to help choose a treatment method so he or she can use the treatment successfully.

Caring for your nails

No nail care product alone can give you healthy nails. But following these simple guidelines can help you keep your nails looking their best:

1 Don't abuse your nails. To prevent nail damage, don't use your fingernails as tools to pick, poke or pry things.

2 Don't bite your nails or pick at your cuticles. These habits can damage the nail bed. Even a minor cut alongside your nail can allow bacteria or fungi to enter and cause an infection (paronychia). Because your nails grow slowly, an injured nail retains signs of an injury for several months.

3 Protect your nails. Wear cotton-lined rubber gloves when using soap and water for prolonged periods or when using harsh chemicals.

4 Perform routine nail maintenance. Trim fingernails and clean under the nails regularly. Use a sharp manicure scissors or clippers and an emery board to smooth nail edges. Never pull off hangnails - doing so almost always results in ripping living tissue. Instead clip hangnails off, leaving a slight angle outward.

5 Moisturize your nails frequently. Nails need moisture just like your skin does. Rub lotion into your nails when moisturizing your hands. Be sure to apply a moisturizer each time you wash your hands.

If you rely on manicures to make your nails look good, keep a few things in mind. Don't have your cuticles removed - it can lead to nail infection. Also, check to be sure that your nail technician properly sterilizes all tools used during your manicure. Using unsterilized tools may transmit viral infections, such as hepatitis B or warts.

Weak or brittle fingernails can be a challenge to toughen up. The following tips can help you protect them, making your nails less likely to split or break.

1 Keep your nails short, square shaped and slightly rounded on top. Trim brittle nails after a bath or a 15-minute hand-soak in bath oil. Then apply a moisturizer.

2 Moisturize your nails and cuticles at bedtime and cover them with cotton gloves.

3 Apply a nail hardener, but avoid products containing toluene sulfonamide or formaldehyde. These chemicals can cause redness or irritate the skin.

4 Don't use nail polish remover more than twice a month.

Instead, touch up the polish. When you do need a remover, avoid those that use acetone, which dries nails.

5 Repair splits or tears with nail glue or clear polish. Dietary changes that supposedly strengthen nails don't work.

Unless you're deficient in protein adding protein to your diet won't strengthen your nails. Similarly, soaking your nails in gelatin won't help either.

It's easy to neglect your nails. But a little basic nail care can go a long way to keeping your nails in healthy condition.

Stage in June

Harlequin Rencontre
Zhong Kui by Didier Galas, one man show in French and Chinese



When: June 1-2
Where: The Central Academy of Drama

2006 French Piano Festival



When: June 2-4
Where: Zhongshan Music Hall
Concert Series by the China National Symphony Orchestra
When: June 3-17
Where: Beijing Concert Hall

Performance by singers from the Moscow Theatre

When: June 10
Where: The Millennium

Monument Concert Hall Aida by Compagnia Marionettistica Carlo Colla and Sons

When: June 10-11
Where: Beijing Children's Theater

Dance Drama 'Ma and Le Visiting the Sky'

When: June 13-14
Where: Poly Theatre



Ballet Giselle

When: June 28-29
Where: Tianqiao Theatre
(Qiu Jiaoning)

Friday, May 12

Exhibition

Vivid Myths – Greek contemporary artist Alecos Fassianos' introspective exhibition

Where: Jin Tai Art Museum inside Chaoyang Park, No. 1 Nongzhan Nan Lu, Chaoyang
When: until May 21
Admission: free
Tel: 6501 4963



Shanghai artists' oil painting exhibition

Attending artists include: Lin Fengmian, Zhang Chongren, Yu Xiaofu, Wang Xiangming, Yang Jianping
Where: Soka Art Center, Room B-101, Sky & Sea Business Plaza, No. 107 Dongsida Beida Street, Dongcheng
When: until May 28



Admission: Free
Tel: 8401 2377

One hundred selected works from Songzhuang (appointment only)

Where: Artist Village Gallery, No.1 North of Renzhuang Village, Songzhuang, Tongzhou
When: until May 31
Tel: 13901244283, 6959 8343



Hermann Nitsch & Yang Shaobin duo exhibition

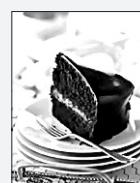
Where: White Space Beijing, No. 2 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang
When: until June 11
Admission: Free
Tel: 8456 2054

Service

Indulgence Unlimited in Le Palais Lounge

Once a month Le Palais invites you to its unique all you can eat dessert buffet.

Where: No. 25 East 3rd Ring Middle Road, north of the Kerry Center
When: May 12
Admission: Buffet of Dessert, 50 yuan per person; Italian Prosecco, 240 yuan per bottle and 60 yuan per glass
Tel: 6508 4209



Movie

Marie-Jo et Ses Deux Amours

A love story about how a woman is forced to make a choice between her husband and lover.
Where: French Cultural Center, 18 Guangcai International Apartment, West Road of Workers' Stadium, Chaoyang
When: 6 pm and 8 pm
Admission: 10 yuan/20 yuan
Tel: 6553 2627



Saturday, May 13

Music

Paul Oakenfold show and promotion of his second album, *A Live-ly Mind*

Where: Babyface, South of Worker's Stadium
When: Mid-night, May 13



Admission: 50-80 yuan per person
Tel: 6551 9081

Sounds of Beijing 2: Rock and Folk

The second night of the Sounds of Beijing series features some of the better-known folk and rock bands from all over China.

Where: South Gate Space, 798, 4

Jiuxianqiao Lu, Dashanzi Art District, Chaoyang
When: 8:30 pm, May 13

Admission: 60 yuan per person; 50 yuan for students
Tel: 6438 2797

Exhibition

Group Exhibition

A multi-media performance art piece that includes DJs, bands and wall projections.

Where: Yan Club Arts Center, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Dashanzi Art District, Chaoyang
When: 7 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 6438 2797

Antenna-hidden talent

Antenna, representing the most avant-garde contemporary UK music videos, will attend Beijing Dashanzi International Arts Festival by screening MTV in step with the UK.



Where: 798, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Dashanzi Art District, Chaoyang
When: May 13
Admission: Free
Website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/china-arts-ukarts.htm>

Sunday, May 14

Exhibition

CCTVTVCC by OMA – works of Ole Scheeren and Rem Koolhaas

Where: Courtyard Gallery, 95 Donghuanmen Dajie
When: May 14 - June 25
Admission: Free
Tel: 6526 8882



Outdoor

Beijing Ultimate Pick Up

Join other ultimate frisbee lovers at Beijing City International School every Sunday for an intense but fun game.

Where: Meet outside McDonalds, Oriental Kenzo Building at the Dongzhimen Subway stop. Exit C at 12 pm to carpool.
When: 1 pm every Sunday
Tel: 13621246069

Service

Plaice Promotion

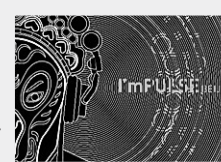
Enjoy this seasonal fish with a variety of complementary German side dishes of your choice.
Tel: Die Kochmutzen at 5869 3830

Music

I'm PULSE Minutes Beijing

The project aims to collect ideas

from Chinese youngsters on music through the creation of one-minute



videos. Twenty Chinese students will be selected to take part in this four-day event, working together with foreign and local musicians from the DJ scene. Professional artists attending include Yue Gu, Danny Ding, Yang Bin, Sam Zaman from the US and Ges-E from Britain.
Where: Dashanzi Art District
When: May 14-18
Admission: Free
Tel: 6438 2797 (Wang Xiaoyuan)

Yoga

Mother baby yoga and pregnancy yoga

Mother baby yoga promotes and enhances parent and baby relaxation as well as bonding. The practice of prenatal yoga can help expecting mothers to prepare her mind and body for child labor and birth. 560 yuan for seven sessions of mother and bay yoga, 480 yuan for six sessions of pregnancy yoga at The Yurt, Beijing United Family Hospital. For details, call Cordelia on 13439174942

Free Beer

Grill and beer party



Enjoy cool beer, a delicious grill and a feast of World Cup football at Beijing

Winners Sports Bar of Apex Sports Club in Jinyuan Shopping Mall, this summer. Cost over 30 yuan for a bottle of free beer. For more details telephone 8887 2948 or go to www.apexsportsclub.com

Pub quiz

The most raucous pub quiz event in town, the John Bull quiz night pulls in the hard drinking, trivia saturated crowd. Break up into teams and compete to win free beer. From 8 pm every Tuesday. For more details telephone 6532 5905

Reader competition

Five lucky readers can each win an IPL underarm hair removal session worth RMB 1,000 each.

Read the following paragraph, answer the easy question below and

email your name, mobile number and answer to btcompetition@ynet.com before Wednesday May 17 2006 at 12:00.

Bioscor International is a leader in Cosmetic Medicine. Non-invasive light therapy is a quick and effective way to

remove unwanted hair. For more information contact (010) 6503 5707 or visit www.bioscor.com.cn.

Question:

Where in Beijing can you get non-invasive light therapy?

Look Forward To A New You

Bioscor International is a leader in cosmetic medicine, and we offer the the latest in cosmetic services, using the best in today's innovative technology.



- Hair Regrowth
- Skin Management
- Anti-Ageing
- Cosmetic Surgery

At Bioscor we offer:

Anti-wrinkle injections/derma fillers

Look younger and more refreshed with injections that help smooth fine lines, deep wrinkles and also enhance or correct facial features e.g. raising the bridge of the nose.

Superpulsed Radio Frequency

A non-invasive treatment that stimulates collagen production in any area of the skin, creating elasticity and firmness i.e. a natural facelift. Can target areas other procedures cannot e.g. eye contour.

Photo-rejuvenation

Target pigmentation, fine lines, capillaries and other skin conditions. Stimulates collagen.

Hair Removal

A quick and effective way to remove unwanted hair using non-invasive light therapy.

Thread lift

A mini non-surgical facelift where no skin is cut away. Targets problem areas using a minimally invasive procedure, using threads under the skin.



Bioscor International

Room 1008, e-Tower building, (opposite Kerry Centre)
No.12, Guang Hua Rd. Chao Yang District, Beijing 100020, China
email: beijing@bioscor.com.cn

朝阳区光华路丙12号数码01大厦1008室(嘉里中心对面)

Mother's Day at Cafe Cha

Treat your mother to this lavish buffet and she will be surprised with a bouquet of carnations, a box of chocolates and a beautiful cake from Cha Deli at Shangri-La Hotel, 14 May. Reservations recommended. Telephone 6841 2211 ext. 2715

2 for 1

Happy Hour



Bar Blu's Happy Hour is now happier than any other. Not only do you have guaranteed discounts and the possibility of free drinks but those friendly people are now also giving away free food. Anyone who buys Happy Hour drinks can enjoy a free plate of snack food on the house. Simply order your drink and get a 2 for 1, half price or 20 yuan per drink offer. 5 pm-9 pm everyday. For details telephone 6417 4124

Free Dish

Happy hour meals



If you order a meal at Beijing Exhibition Hall Hotel, including Yangfang restaurant and Volga restaurant, at a cost of over 100 yuan, you will get an additional dish for free. Like baked trepang, Wuchang fish, wine baked brawn, fried pork chop, French fried codfish or Russian patty. For more details telephone 6831 6633 ext. 7011/7014 or go to www.beizhanhotel.com

50% Off

Ceviche promotion

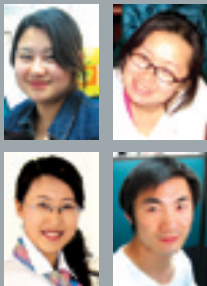
Eat delicious raw seafood marinated in citrus juices - a popular Peruvian recipe. Make the most of this buy-one-get-one-free promotion and enjoy ceviches with your cocktail at Garden of Delights. For more information telephone 5138 5688

We would be happy to receive your discount info, so that readers can purchase their goods and services at a proper time and proper price. Feel free to email us at bjtoday@ynet.com or call 6590 2626

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Hotline:

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By Han Manman

Every year, thousands of students send their resumes to top companies to apply for internship positions with the hope of being hired. Among those, some get selected and some failed. For those who failed, do you know why the boss chose another candidate? For those who were successful, do you know why you succeeded?

Below we interview some successful interns and their employers to find out their stories and get tips for job seekers.

This week, four journalists from *Beijing Today* talk about their experience of doing an internship, and Jian Rong, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper talks about why they were picked as interns.

My life as an intern at *Beijing Today*



Comments from Jian:

In 2004, we decided we need to recruit more journalism majors. Before that, most of our interns had majored in English. We found it was a little hard for English major students to develop reporting

skills. They are good at translating but they lack creative ideas. Chu was one of the top 10 graduates in her university and was recommended to our newspaper. She also had all the basic elements needed to be a good reporter.

Chu Meng:

Chu Meng: reporter, graduated from Communication University of China two years ago, joined *Beijing Today* in July 2004 after a two-month internship. I changed after my internship. I graduated from a famous

media university and majored in international news. I think the reason I got a job here is because of my media experience and university background. My hard work is also a possible reason. I started to write for

the front page when I was an intern. There was a lot of pressure and I was worried that I wouldn't be able to write a decent story. So for a long time, I would write a story through the night, and slept for a few

hours in the office. I viewed the internship period as a learning procedure. I didn't know if the boss would hire me at that time, I just told myself not to think about the pay or other things; just try to learn

something everyday through the work. For example, I didn't like political news when I was a student, but when I worked in this field at the paper I learned a lot and really enjoy it.

Photo by Han Manman

Comments from Jian:

Shasha got the highest marks for her interview and met all of our standards. She was already a TV channel in-charge before she came here, which proves that she has ability and a strong sense of responsibility.

She comes from a one-parent family. In most one-parent families, the children have a great sense of responsibility to care and consider others. She has some hobbies such as playing badminton and singing. She has played badminton at a very high level since she was five years old which shows she is competitive and determined.

Chen Shasha:



Chen Shasha: currently working as an intern selected from over 100 applicants, a Chinese literature major who graduated from Fudan University last year. When I was informed that I had passed the written examination I knew I would be successful even if I needed a face-to-face interview after that. I guess the main reason the boss chose me was because I know what I want and I make the interviewer believe that I can do the work. I was eager to become a journalist when I was a high school student. As well as doing my major, I joined many other classes like economics and law, and did a lot to prepare for being a reporter. I think the boss selected me because I have ideas and I did a lot of preparation. When preparing for an interview, I will collect as many materi-

als as I can, such as the company background and news about the company. If the boss asked me to say something about their company or give some suggestions or ideas, I would have a lot to say. I have a lot of freedom working at Beijing Today and the job gives me a lot of opportunities. Everyone can voice his or her own ideas and creative thoughts here. I worked in a TV station before, which was good but not the life I expected. My suggestion for those students who want to find an intern job is to try to work in different companies when you are a student. Not so many people are clear about what they really like at the beginning. Getting a job in a top company is difficult but getting an internship doesn't have to be too hard.

Photo by Chen Shasha

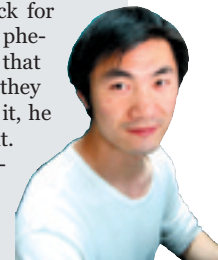
Comments from Jian:

The main reasons for selecting Jiang is that we needed some men to do tough interviews, as most of our reporters are girls.

He was also very honest in the interview. We asked a tricky question about whether he had ever received a kickback for attending a news conference, which is a very common phenomenon in Chinese media circles. He frankly admitted that he had, while lots of interviewees tried to make out that they knew nothing about this. When asked what he did with it, he said he gave it to his supervisor but she told him to keep it.

What impressed me was that he wasn't willing to comment on his supervisor allowing him to keep the money. His answer suggested to us that he respected his supervisor and the relationship he had with her.

Jiang Xubo:



Jiang Xubo: currently working as an intern selected from over 100 applicants. He was awarded a master's degree in Journalism in Xiamen University last year. I don't know why the boss chose me; maybe they chose me for my sincerity and confidence. In my interview, I answered every question they asked me honestly. In the first written examination, most of the applicants brought a dictionary with them. I forgot, so I just left the

Chinese characters I didn't know how to translate into English on the paper. I thought the boss would not care as much about this as they would about my thoughts and ideas. On my first day as an intern I spent a whole day just sitting in the corner with nothing to do. I didn't know what I could do, everyone was very busy and I didn't know whom I could ask for help. That was quite a tough day but I learnt a lot from it.

My two-month internship has made me much more competitive. It is a very high-pressured working environment. For example, we have a daily news meeting and sometimes my colleagues take the topics I want to report on. The biggest thing I've learnt over these last two months is that life is not easy! I want to say to other interns, "hold on and keep holding on and you will be a success".

Photo by Han Manman

Comments from Jian:

We need reporters to have various abilities. We want them not only to be able to write hard news but also entertainment stories and features.

In 2005, we decided to create a page to cover foreigners living in Beijing. We needed people who not only had a good news sense but also a good command of English and a familiarity with the foreign community. Wei was the perfect choice. She mixes with foreigners everyday at work and in her spare time. She was therefore able to write lots of interesting stories about foreigners living in Beijing.



Wei Ying:

Wei Ying: reporter, graduated from Tianjin University five years ago, joined *Beijing Today* in July 2005 after a two-month internship. I was already 25 when I came to Beijing Today as an intern.

Compared with other graduates, maybe I was more mature and proactive. Sometimes my ideas are very bad or difficult to carry out, but I still try to discuss them. Even if my boss does not use it, they will think I am creative and

that I use my brains. As an intern, you will come up against a lot of different challenges, sometimes you won't be satisfied or you won't understand. Interns are always a group of people that stay 'at the

bottom of the office', you won't know what is wrong or right, you may get into some arguments, but if you can, try to stay out of them and just do your own work.

Photo by Wei Ying

Durham University to recruit in Beijing



Tony Antoniou

By Chen Shasha

Tony Antoniou, dean of Britain's Durham University's business school will come to China with his Chinese students as part of the university's recruitment drive.

As one of the oldest in Britain, Durham University is only three hours by train from London. According to the newly issued 2006 Global MBA ranking by the *Financial Times*, its business school ranks number 10 in Europe for its academic research.

Mr Antoniou was a guest in our study abroad chat room this week where he introduced his faculty.

Q: Could you tell us about the academic achievements of your faculty?

A: The excellence of our programmes and faculty has been recognised by the European Foundation for Management Development (EQUIS) and the leading accrediting body for MBA programmes – AMBA (The Association of MBAs).

The School's finance department received a rating of five on a scale of one to five in the latest Research Assessment Exercise. The School has around 200 staff members.

Research focuses on the following subject themes: Finance and Accounting; Economics; Work, Management and Organisation (including Public Policy and Management); International Business, Strategy and Marketing; and Entrepreneurship.

Q: Which kind of students do you prefer and how could Chinese students get an offer from your faculty?

A: We encourage applications from all candidates who have achieved the required qualifications and who can demonstrate potential and real commitment to their own development. A willingness to share their own experiences and an aspirational attitude will all fit in with the School's culture of continuous learning. We also offer Chinese students the opportunity to attend our language school if further English study is required.

Q: What are the career opportunities for graduates, especially those overseas students from China?

A: A degree from Durham Business School is not only about the knowledge. It's just as important to equip graduates with the softer leadership skills that will help them to succeed in the workplace. We help our students to develop the leadership and people management skills, important for their suc-



Photos provided by Durham University

cess as business leaders.

All students at the school have access to career guidance and job vacancies worldwide, both during their time in Durham and after their graduation. The university has a comprehensive careers service and the business school has dedicated careers managers.

This support continues once students graduate through our network of over 10,000 alumni and current students worldwide, called 'Agora'. This network assists its members to maintain the value of their business education and qualification and brings the School's wider community closer together.

Q: Are there co-operations between your faculty and Chi-

nese universities, such as student exchanges? How about your future plans for Chinese student recruitment?

A: We currently are working in collaboration with: The School of Economics, Renmin University of China, Beijing, The Hang Seng School of Commerce, Shatin, Hong Kong and Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon.

The current series of MBA Fairs underlines our commitment to ensuring that we continue to attract talented students from across China.

Q: What about scholarship?

A: We are delighted to be able to offer a number of Dean's scholarships – these are open to self-

funded top class candidates who can demonstrate a good potential. Full-fee scholarships may be awarded to exceptional candidates and a number of partial scholarships may also be awarded.

We also offer an MBA scholarship programme with a leading UK newspaper, The Independent.

Q: What else is on offer in addition to the academic side of the MBA programme?

A: Continuous personal and professional development is key for students at Durham Business School. Using the MBA programme as an example, we offer a range of self-development activities including a team development activity weekend, seminars and workshops. Upon graduation students receive a signed transcript, which can be used as evidence of additional skills gained.

Students also get the chance to take part in our unique boardroom simulation, which gives them the opportunity to experience a real boardroom experience. (Back-ground on boardroom simulation – working in small groups, students take a role on a corporate board that simulates the behaviour of an executive team in a real organisa-

One-year work program in UK opens to overseas students

By Tom Mackenzie

The British Government has launched a scheme to entice tens of thousands more Chinese students to the UK.

From this month, Chinese students who choose to do post-graduate studies in Britain will be allowed to work in the country for 12 months after completing their course. Graduates who get a 2:2 degree level or above in under-subscribed subjects like maths, science and engineering, will also be entitled to work per year without a job permit.

"I believe that this new scheme will, and should be, very attractive to Chinese students," said the UK's newly appointed minister for higher education, Bill Rammell. "We have a target of attracting 100,000 overseas students and by far the largest number of overseas students will come from China. The opportunities for postgraduates and graduates finding work in the UK are significant. We currently have unemployment levels in the UK at record lows."

There are currently around 53,000 Chinese students studying in the UK and 160 further education programs have been set up between China and Britain. The British reckon their new one-year working scheme, an 87 per cent visa application approval rate, and the chance for students to work 20 hours a week as they study will significantly boost the numbers of Chinese choosing to study in the UK.

This culminates in a board meeting in which the team seeks to convince a Board Chair of significant experience that they have a clear and well thought out strategy and can deliver future performance effectively).

Note:

The recruitment of Durham University's business school will be held at Beijing Sci-tech Hotel, Jianguomenwai Avenue, 1:30 pm, May 18. To book tickets, email to: info@ukeas.com.cn

Notice

Next week's guest: President of TSS (the scholarship), the first university on the ship that will travel around the world within 16 weeks.

Future guests:

President of Nottingham University
Vice-chancellor of Salford University

If you have questions to ask the above or some other universities, please write to: Shirley_chen@ynet.com.

Have you been learning English for many years but believe your standard of English is low? Do you think in Chinese first before talking in English? Actually, Chinglish is everywhere no matter how hard we study English. However, with the help of native speakers, learning English can be easier than you expect. Keep practicing and your efforts will be rewarded.

As the number of graduates increases, not every one of the Class of '06 has secured a good job. Writing a good cover letter is the first step. Here is a letter by a graduate and comments by Jim. Jim is a British and has lived in China for 12 years. He currently works as a foreign expert for Beijing Today.

Dear Sir/Madam:

Your advertisement looking for a sells assistant in the May 1 Student Daily interested me because the position that you described sounds exactly like the kind of job I am seeking.

According to the advertisement, your position requires top university, Bachelor or above in economics or equivalent field. I feel that I am competent to meet the requirements. I will be graduating from Graduate School of Tsinghua University this year with a M.S. degree. My studies have included courses in computer control and management and I designed a control simulation system developed with Microsoft Visual InterDev and SQL Server.

During my education, I have grasped the principals of my major and skills of practice. Not only have I passed CET-6, but also more important I can communicate with others freely in English. My ability to write and speak English is out of question.

I would appreciate your time in reviewing my enclosed resume and if there is any additional information you require, please contact me. I would welcome an opportunity to meet with you for a personal interview.

With many thanks!

Mike

How to write good cover letter



Follow Beijing Today

This column is open to those who want to improve their English but lack foreign specialized help. We will review the English articles you send to shirley_chen@ynet.com. Suggestions will be given on how to improve the Chinglish sentences in your articles.

Please be sure the article is written in English, around 500 words in total. The theme for articles submitted this month is the family. Please do not forget to include your name and address.

CFP Photo

Jim's comments

Overall, this is not a bad cover letter: it is well structured, with each paragraph addressing a separate point. Mike is also careful to provide pertinent information – the post he is applying for, where he saw the advertisement, how his experience fits the employer's requirements, and some of his relevant skills. These are all aspects of good writing – being clear about the purpose of the writing, understanding what your reader needs to know and structuring your piece to make your points clearly. There are some critical errors in the letter. The very first line contains an embarrassing mistake. Mike says he is interested in an advertised post for a 'sells assistant'. This is

almost certainly a misreading or mistranslation of the job title 'sales assistant'. It looks very bad to be wrong on what is after all the central point of the letter – the job vacancy.

In the second paragraph, Mike has made some more minor mistakes. The grammar of 'your position requires top university' is wrong. Mike should write something like 'you are seeking graduates from top universities for this position'. When he says he is 'competent to meet the requirements', Mike is only claiming that he could meet them, not that he actually does. He should say straight out that, 'my education background meets these requirements'. Being more definite also makes for stronger writing here.

He also says he has 'a M.S. degree'. This is not clear. The

acronym for a Master of Science degree is either MS or M.Sc. I would prefer a sentence such as 'I will be graduating with a Master of Science degree.' I would make clear exactly what the degree was in. If Mike were a Master of Arts, the correct abbreviation would be MA, which is also normally written without periods. The same is true for the undergraduate Bachelor of Arts degree, a BA, though the science equivalent is written 'B.Sc.' Getting details like this can right can make all the difference. A larger point here is to always be aware of what the acronym you are using stands for. This will help you use it appropriately in your overall sentence.

Paragraph three also begins with a bad mistake. When Mike writes he has 'grasped the principals' he almost certainly wants to say he

has a thorough understanding of the principles of his major, which is a quite different thing. Mike uses the sentence structure 'not only.../but also...' next, and does so quite clumsily. In good use set structures like this are often best adapted to the context to read more smoothly. Something like 'I have not only passed my CET-6 in English language proficiency, more importantly I am able to communicate freely in real-world situations', which appears to be the point he is trying to make. Also fatal is Mike's claim to be able to communicate freely in English coupled with a mistaken use of the language. He says his ability is 'out of question'; he means it is beyond question. Of course, this mistake undermines his claim. Mike may have been better off making the more modest claim that 'I am confident

that my abilities in both spoken and written English are more than adequate'. A lesser claim expressed correctly will emphasize the point better. The ending is too informal. The standard way to close a business letter to a person whose name you do not know is 'yours faithfully', and it would have been better to open with 'Dear Sir or Madam' written in full, rather than use a backslash as Mike has done. Mike should have also signed the letter with his full name. When the name of your correspondent is known, you should use it to address them and end your letter 'yours sincerely'. More informal endings to letters, such as Mike has used here, are permissible in a business context, but are best avoided in the first instance.

Edited by Chen Shasha

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see some Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to shirley_chen@ynet.com with your name and address.

Chinglish in the Forbidden City

By Tom Mackenzie

The original sentence: The Imperial Palace is the largest and most complete group of ancient buildings which China has preserved to the present.

Suggestions: The first sentence of the sign in the Forbidden City is rather clumsy – the information could be encapsulated much more simply. You do not need to add 'to the present' at the end of the sentence because it is written in the present tense so the reader will assume it refers to the present.

The original sentence: In 1961 the Imperial Palace was listed by

the State Council as one of 'the important historical monuments under the protection of the government', and, in 1987, it was affirmed by the UNESCO as 'the world heritage'.

Suggestions: This sentence is long and rambling and could be improved by putting a full stop after the word 'government' to make two sentences. And the statement that 'it was affirmed by the UNESCO as 'the world heritage' doesn't make sense. The site was affirmed as a world heritage site, not as 'the world heritage'.

The original sentence: The

Qing dynasty was overthrown in the revolution of 1911 from then on, as the Feudal Imperial Palace, the Forbidden City completed its historic mission.

Suggestions: This would be a better way to construct the sentence. "After the Qing dynasty was overthrown in the revolution of 1911, the Forbidden City completed its historic mission as the Feudal Imperial Palace."

The original sentence: Since the founding of The People's Republic of China in 1949 not only the palace buildings have been repaired, but also a vast amount of work on the

arrangement, restoration, collection and exhibition of precious cultural relics has been made.

Suggestions: Reading it through, it sounds like a direct translation from Chinese. This would be a better way to write it; "Since the founding of The People's Republic of China in 1949, not only have the palace buildings been repaired, but there has also been a vast amount of work done on the arrangement, restoration, collection and exhibition of precious cultural relics."

Edited by Chen Shasha

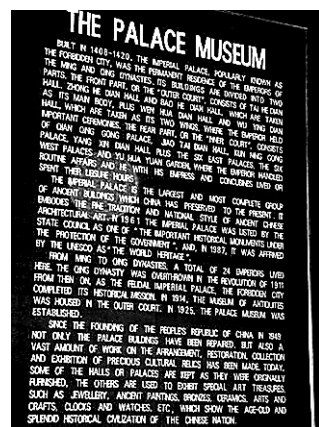


Photo by Tom Mackenzie



The Legend of 1900

At last, Max finds his life-long friend, Nineteen Hundred, on the soon-to-be-destroyed ship Virginia at the end of World War II. The two friends sit on TNT boxes, accompanied by the sound of water dripping and machine faraway, to have a farewell talk.

Max What have you been up to⁽¹⁾ all these years?

1900 Making music.

Max Even during the war?

1900 Even when no one was dancing any more. Even when the bombs were falling. The music helped them get better. The wounded I mean. Or else, I kept them entertained, as they slipped into another world. (Light up) Sometimes, they didn't even mind the voyage, if they could listen to the music. Mine was the last face they saw. And I kept playing, till the ship got here.

Max Call this a ship? (Looks around) It's more like a mountain of dynamite about to explode. A bit dangerous, don't you think?

1900 (avoids answering the question) And you, Max? Where's your trumpet?

Max I gave it up as well, a while back. But you know now I'm in a mood for starting again. I'm bustling with⁽²⁾ new ideas. Let's start a duo, you and me. Or our own band: The 'Danny Boodman T.D.Lemon Nineteen Hundred Big Band!' huh? (Nineteen Hundred smiles quietly) It gets the blood going! We'd be a smash⁽³⁾. C'mon, Nineteen Hundred, come with me. Let's get off, watch the fireworks from the pier. And then we'll start from scratch⁽⁴⁾. Sometimes that's the way you have to do it-you go right back to the beginning. (Nineteen Hundred doesn't respond to this suggestion, and Max continues) You're never really done for⁽⁵⁾ as long as you've got a good story, and someone to tell it to. Remember? Uh? You told



The Legend of 1900
(1999)

Starring:

Tim Roth

Pruitt Taylor Vince

Mélanie Thierry

Bill Nunn

Clarence Williams III

Peter Vaughan

Director:

Giuseppe Tornatore

Synopsis:

This epic tale follows the life of a boy who grows up on an ocean liner that ferries immigrants from Europe to the US. He is an eccentric and talented pianist but never once steps off the ship. Years later, when the ship is scheduled for demolition, his musician pal comes to the ship to try to find out if his friend is still on board.

me that. (Nineteen smiles as if saying 'yeah') What a fantastic story you've got now! The world would hang on⁽⁶⁾ your every word, and they'd go crazy for your music. Believe me.

1900 (looks at Max calmly, and slowly, he starts to reveal the mystery about why he went back on the middle of the gangway) All that city...You just couldn't see an end to it. The end? Please, you please show me where it ends? ...

It was all very fine on that gangway, and I was grand, too, in my overcoat. I cut quite a figure⁽⁷⁾, and I was getting off, guaranteed. That wasn't the problem. It wasn't what I saw that stopped me, Max. It was what I didn't see. You understand that? What I didn't see... In all that sprawling city, there was everything except an end. There was no end. What I did not see was where the whole thing came to an end, the end of the world. (gives a black smile)

Take a piano. Keys begin, keys end. You know there are 88 of them, nobody can tell you

any different. They are not infinite, you are infinite. And on those keys the music that you can make is infinite. I like that. That I can live by.

(Max smiles agreeably, but Nineteen Hundred comes to the point, his voice becomes sharper)

You get me up on that gangway and you roll out in front of me a keyboard of millions of keys, millions of billions of keys that never end and that's the truth, Max, and they never end, that keyboard is infinite. If that keyboard is infinite, on that keyboard there's no music you can play.

(pauses, calm down, as if he wants to calm Max)

You're sitting on the wrong bench⁽⁸⁾. (stress) That's God's piano.

(again voice up) Christ, did you, did you see the streets, just the streets? There were thousands of them! How do you do it down there, how do you choose just one? One woman, one house, one piece of land to call your own, one landscape to look at, one way to die. All that world just weighing down on⁽⁹⁾ you and you don't

even know where it comes to an end. Aren't you ever just scared of it breaking you apart, just thought of it, the enormity of living in it?

(pauses, calmly) I was born on this ship, and the world passed me by, but two thousand people at a time. And there were wishes here, but never more than fit between prow and stern. You played out your happiness but on a piano that was not infinite. I learned to live that way.

(pauses) Land? Land is a ship too big for me, it's a woman too beautiful, a voyage too long, a perfume too strong. It's music I don't know how to make.

(Max's face clouds) I can never get off this ship. At best, I can step off my life. (Max can't help weeping) After all, I don't exist for anyone. You're exception, Max. You're the only one who knows I'm here. You're a minority, and you'd better get used to it. (quietly yet firmly) Forgive me, my friend, but I'm not getting off.

(Nineteen Hundred stops here, two friends sits face to face, all is silent except the sound of Max weeping.)

Vocabulary

(1) **up to**: What have you been up to? = what have you been doing?

(2) **bustling with**: to be busily active, often noisily

(3) **smash**: a very successful new play, book, film, etc

(4) **start from scratch**: start-

ing from the beginning or with nothing

(5) **done for**: usually means a person will be dead, or suffer some horrible fate

(6) **hang on**: to pay close attention to

(7) **cut quite a figure**: to

cause people to admire you because of your appearance

(8) **sit on the wrong bench**: support the wrong side

(9) **weighing (down) on**: causing a person to worry and brood